IMPRIMATUR,

Dec. 19. 1692.

C. Alſton, R. P. D. Hen. Epiſc. Lond. à Sacris.

IMPRIMATUR,

Dec. 19. 1692.

C. Alſton, R. P. D. Hen. Epiſc. Lond. à Sacris.

BIBLIOTECA

A

Practical Discourse

OF

PATIENCE.

Setting forth the

EXCELLENCY
USEFULNESS
and
REWARDS

thereof.

By a Divine of the Church of *England.*

LONDON:
Printed for Samuel Lowndes
over against *Exeter Exchange*
in the *Strand.* 1693.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

THE

PREFACE.

FOR Satisfaction to thoſe, to whom Cuſtom makes a Preface a Debt, the Author is willing to let us know, that this Treatiſe of Patience was the Argument of ſeveral Letters written to a Perſon of great Honour and Religion to ſupport her under one of the heavieſt Strokes that God's hand could lay upon her in this World, except he had wounded her Spirit with ſo deep a Sence of his Diſpleaſure againſt her, by reaſon of her Sins, as not to be aſſwaged, and made his Arrows ſtick ſo faſt there, as not to be drawn out.

And tho' what ſhe then found in ſome meaſure uſeful to the mitigating her Anguiſh under ſo ſharp a Trial and the ſtaying her Mind from ſinking under ſo terrible a Blow, ſhe judged might be beneficial to others in ſome circumſtances of Sorrow like hers, or any other ſort of Trouble the World is full of, either to calm and ſoften the Violence of their Paſſions, or to uphold their Minds from extreme Dejection, or raiſe them up again; and thereupon deſired it might be communicated for their benefit as far as publiſhing it would ſerve that end; yet the Author at that time modeſtly declined the complying with that Requeſt, upon this Conſideration among others, that though ſhe was a Perſon in her ſelf of a very accurate Judgment, yet ſhe might paſs too favourable,

and

and conſequently a partial one on it with regard to him who ſent it; and that ſhe probably might commend the Preſcriptions contained in it; not becauſe they had any extraordinary Virtue in them to give her any eaſe, or to help towards working a Cure upon her afflicted Spirit, but from being pleaſed with the charitable Intentions of him who dictated them to her in that Diſtreſs; as ſome Medicines prove many times effectual to the relief of a Patient, not ſo much from having a Force adequate to the Diſtemper, as from the ſick Perſons good Opinion of the Phyſician, who directed them. Since that time till almoſt this preſent, this Tract hath been laid aſide neglected among ſeveral other Papers, both of different, and agreeable Subjects to it: When

the

the Author resumed and reviewed it, to try what assistance he could draw from the Considerations therein offered to another, to buoy up his own Mind under a less sort of Calamity befallen him (as that Word is often applied to signifie the diminution of ones Condition) and to enable him to bear the Adversity, as in the Phrase of the World any sort of Suffering is styled.

And finding some Advantage of that kind to himself from perusing his own Meditations, he began thence to entertain an Opinion, (and hopes it may not be too kind and fond a one) That perhaps they might be in the same sort beneficial to others. And indeed the Shipwracks which befall Mankind on this Sea, which is the Scene of their Commerce and Management of Affairs, are so

ſo frequent, as render innumerable Perſons ſo miſerable, at leaſt as to ſtand in need of being relieved by good Counſel; the accidents ſo many, various and ſudden by which they are thrown down from their Station, when they have imagined themſelves moſt ſtrongly rooted, and by the Fall ſo bruiſed and cruſhed, that make it a ſeaſonable Charity to endeavour to bind up their Wounds, to pour in ſome Oyl to mollifie their eagerneſs, and to adminiſter ſome Wine to revive and refreſh their Spirits. And laſt of all, there are multitudes of others, whoſe Virtue being too ſluggiſh, weak and drooping to uphold and maintain it ſelf againſt any violent ſhock, may make it neceſſary to have it excited, quickned and animated by ſuch Hortatory Diſcourſes, and confirmed by

by the Heroick Behaviour of thoſe, whoſe Examples are here repreſented.

If God ſhall be pleaſed by the influence of his bleſſed Spirit to proſper the Advices here laid down, the Reaſons, with Motives and Encouragements, by which they are enforced, ſo as they may work any part of the fore-mentioned good effects on any perſon who ſhall have the mind or opportunity to peruſe them, he who makes them Publick will have the abundant Satisfaction of having attained the end he propounded in doing ſo, and the pleaſure of having thoſe good Wiſhes he ſends them accompanied with into the World anſwered and compleated, and may God have all the Glory.

The

THE CONTENTS.

S. 1. *The Viciſſitudes of the World, and the various Calamities of Humane Life, make a Diſcourſe on this Argument uſeful.* Page 1

S. 2. *The Deſignation of the Method.* p. 3

S. 3. *A Definition of Patience, what it is.* p. 5

S. 4. *Arguments repreſenting the neceſſity and benefit of exerciſing this Vertue.* p. 8

Arg. 1. § 1. *Impatience being the Original of all Evil, will let us ſee this.* p. 9

Arg. 2. § 2. *Patience the Principle of all Obedience, and ſo of all Virtue.* p. 13. *Of Charity in forgiving.* ib. *And Charity in diſpenſing Alms*, p. 14. *Of Mortification, and of the Confeſſing of Jeſus Chriſt.* p. 15

Arg. 3. § 3. *No Calamity ſo heavy but may be born with Patience*, p. 16. *And* (2) *ſo born it becomes lighter.* p. 26

Arg.

Arg 4. § 4. *Sustain'd by Patience it turns to good account, whereas Impatience renders imaginary Evils, real ones, and augments the real.* p. 29

Arg. 5. § 5. *The Danger of Prosperity, if not born with moderation, and the difficulty of bearing it so helps mightily towards the bearing of Adversity with Patience.* p. 41

Arg. 6. § 6. *Afflictions are sent by God, and therefore to be born with* Patience, p. 45. *For,* (1) *He may justly send them by vertue of his Supreme Dominion,* p. 55. (2) *Tho' he may do this, yet he always sends them in Wisdom.* (3) *In Goodness to us.* p. 69

Arg. 7 § 7. *Patience is necessary to Perseverance, and so consequently to Salvation, because there is no Salvation without Perseverance.* p. 74

S. 5. *Examples produced to engage us unto the practice of this Vertue by the force of imitation.* § 1. (1) *The Example of God's* Patience *alledged to stir us up to the exercise of it, when so doing we imitate him.* p. 84

§ 2. (2) *The Example of Christ.* p. 90

§ 3. (3) *The Example of* Job. p. 107

(4) *Examples of others might be superadded, even of Heathens as well as Christians.*

Christians. p. 116
S. 6. *The Practise of it urged from the Consideration of the Example of God's Saints.* p. 121
S. 7. *Directions for establishing our Mind in Patience, by considering,* (Dir. 1. § 1.) *The inevitableness of Afflictions and Calamities.* p. 128
§ 2. *That we have reduced our selves to the suffering them as a punishment for our Sins.* p. 139
N. 1. *And first it is set forth, that they are Punishments which our Sins have merited.* p. 140
N. 2. *That albeit they are merited, yet they are less than we have merited.* p. 149
N. 3. *As God may, so he will punish us farther, if we are impatient under his Correction, even for this Sin of Impatience.* p. 152
§ 3. *By considering their Necessity in regard of our Christian Calling.*
N. 1. *Their Necessity* (1) *from God's Ordination.* p. 155
N. 2. *From a voluntary Obligation we have brought our selves under to suffer.* p. 159
N. 3. *From the Connexion there is between enduring them, and receiving the*

the Reward we hope and contend for. p. 161

Dir. 2. § 4. *By considering that they are sent not altogether in Justice to punish us, but* (1) *in Clemency to reform, and so to prevent the inflicting of more terrible Punishments.* p. 165

(2.) *As Paternal Corrections, and so as marks of Paternal Affection.* p. 171

Dir. 3. § 5. *By considering that God in a proper and convenient Season will ease or deliver us out of all our Afflictions.* p. 181

Dir. 4. § 6 *We should weigh with our selves the important advantages of Patience, both in regard to the present and future Life.* p. 188

N. 1. *And first, we should consider the Advantages in order to a future Life, of bearing with Patience the ills which are done us by Men, because God will avenge us.* p. 189

N. 2. 2. *Because he will amply reward us with the Joys of Heaven, which in an infinite proportion transcend the Sufferings of this Life. This Consideration made the Confessors and Martyrs of old meet and bear their Sufferings with so much Alacrity as they did.* p. 196

N. 3.

N. 3. Memb. 1. *The ſame Conſideration of the Reward will make us bear patiently the Evils which are the common incidents of Humanity.* p. 215

As firſt, Diſeaſes which are of God's infliction. p. 216

M. 2. 2. *Death. The worſt kinds of it, and in any place or time.* p. 222

M. 3. 3. *The Death of our Friends, which uſually cauſeth a Sorrow of all others the moſt afflicting.* p. 231

S. 7. § 7. Dir. 5. *To read frequently the Holy Scriptures, and to meditate on the Precepts and Examples of Patience ſet forth there.* p. 247

S. 7. § 8. Dir. 6. *To pray to God to ſet home all, both Precepts and Examples of Patience on our Hearts, and infuſe the Grace of Patience, and the Joys and Comforts of his Holy Spirit into them.* p. 251

A Collect for Patience. p. 260

ERRATA.

ERRATA.

PAge 29. Marg. for *illuſtrated* read *ſuſtained*. Ib. for *whereby* read *whereas*. p. 129. del. Marg. s. in reſpect of our Humanity.

A Practical Diſcourſe OF PATIENCE.

The Diſcourſe on the Argument uſeful amidſt the Viciſſitudes of the worldly Calamities of Humane Life.

SINCE there is nothing permanent and durable in this World, no, not it ſelf; but the Earth, while it is laid upon Foundations ſo ſure that it cannot be moved, ſhall yet melt away like Wax at the Second and Glorious Appearance of our Lord, when he ſhall return to judge the World: The Heavens likewiſe, and thoſe Faithful Witneſſes the Sun and Moon, ſhall not keep their Courſes for ever, [nor have ſome Planets, if *Varro's* Obſervation be true, kept the ſame Figure, Greatneſs and Motion they had] but ſhall at that day paſs away

like thin Mists before the Meridian Heat.

Since many of the less parts of the Earth moulder and decay before-hand, goodly Territories have been swallowed up by Inundations or Earthquakes, and the fairest Cities have by the hand of Time been laid as low in the ground as the Quarries whence their Stones were first dug: Stately and magnificent Piles of Building have been buried so deep under their own Ruines, as the most Curious with all their Inquisition, have not been able to discover the place of their Interment.

Since the mightiest and strongest built Empires have had their Declension, Wane and Period as well as their Birth, Rise and Growth; and those which now are, shall have the same Fate.

Since every day shews the brittleness and variableness of our Constitution, and scarce a larger portion of Time passeth over our Heads, which makes not a considerable Change in our Condition; and not the smallest alteration of this kind, either befalling our selves, or things, or persons, for which we have an Affection, if we are Sufferers

ferers thereby, but makes an Impreſſion of Sorrow and Trouble on us; and theſe are apt to over-ſwell their Banks, and grow immoderate, unleſs repreſſed or reſtrained; and they are beſt rebated and aſſwaged by a patient bearing all the Evils which befall us, and an Equanimity, which is the Conſequent or Indication of this, in every ſtate and circumſtance of our Lives. I cannot think but it may be uſeful to Mankind in general, and in part ſeaſonable to ſeveral afflicted Members of that great Community, to recommend to them the exerciſe of this Vertue of Patience for that purpoſe.

§ 2. This will be beſt done, if in a Diſcourſe on this Argument I begin with declaring the Nature of the Vertue, and inſtructing them what Patience is. (2.) Then proceed to the producing ſuch Arguments which may convince them, that the practice of it, even upon ſuch occaſions, which are ſo ſharp, as they may ſeem at moſt to juſtifie, or at leaſt to excuſe inordinate Paſſion, is moſt reaſonable. (3.) Next to the propounding ſuch Examples as may induce them by the Imitation of them to the Exerciſe of it, (4.) And

The Deſignation of the Method.

conclude in preſcribing ſome Directions for the eaſier attaining to, or the better diſcharge of it.

But before I ſet my hands to work upon the Materials I have marked out, or by the Model I have drawn, it's but juſt to premiſe an humble Confeſſion to my own Reproach, of my unfitneſs to Treat of this Subject, imitating herein that Father, who arreſted himſelf at the very entrance of his Diſcourſe upon this Theme to do ſo.

Tertul. c. 1. de Pat. p. 159. ad Rig. confiteor ad Dominum Deum, ſatis temerè me, &c.

As he therefore, ſo I likewiſe acknowledge, that I may appear too impudent in the Eyes of the All-ſeeing God, and too preſumptuous in the Opinion of my Fellow-Creatures, who know me to adventure upon recommending the Vertue of Patience to others, who find it too hard a Task for my own Weakneſs to practice; whereas it is highly convenient, if not in ſome meaſure neceſſary, that they who undertake the Recommendation of a Virtue to others, ſhould firſt be Maſters of it themſelves.

For it's a ſhame that any ones Words and Actions; a greater, that the Doctrine of an Inſtructor, and his Converſation, ſhould be at variance with each

each other. And yet I am ready to think, by way of Apology or Extenuation of my Confidence to add what he did; *Tet as Men in Fevers are apt to talk with pleaſure of that temperature of Health they want*; ſo I, reſtleſs as I am under a burning Calenture of Paſſion, may be allowed to ſpeak with ſome agreeable Guſto of the Vertue I am deſtitute of, but yet deſire and thirſt after it as much as they do for cooling Juleps.

Idem ibid. Itaque velut ſolatium erit diſputare ſuper eo quo frui non datur, &c.

§ 3. This being premiſed, I enter upon declaring what this Patience is, which ſhould Sovereignly preſide o're, and manage the Motions of the Inferiour Soul, eſpecially thoſe of the Iraſcible Faculty.

The Definition of Patience.

Lactantius hath defined it to be the bearing all the Injuries and Deſpights which may be done us, and all the ſiniſter Accidents which may befal us with an Evenneſs of Mind. || Another, following the Decrees of the *Stoicks*, calls it a ready or willing ſuffering of Evils without any manner of Complaint.

Lactant. Inſtit. l. 5. c. 22.

|| *Lipſ. de Conſt. l. 1. c. 4.*

From whence we may collect, that we then poſſeſs our Souls in Patience, which is what we are commanded by

* Luk. 21. 19. our Saviour to do *, or that *Patience hath then it's perfect work*, which is what the Apoſtle exhorts us to let it † Ja. 1. 3. have †; when the ſeveral Viciſſitudes and Changes without, cauſe no Alterations within, when we continue the ſame through all the various Scenes we paſs, or amidſt all the Revolutions which turn over our Heads.

When we keep the ſame footing, though all about us be moved and out of courſe; ſtand firm though the Earth Iſa. 24. 20. tremble, *Reel to and fro like a Drunkard, or be removed like a Cottage*, in the Prophets Elegancy; or though *the* Pſal. 46. *Sea make a noiſe and rage horribly, and the hills be carried into the midſt of it*, in the Pſalmiſts; are like Gold unchanged either in the Furnace of Affliction, or in the Sun-ſhine of Proſperity; are the ſame in foul and tempeſtuous Weather, as in ſerene and calm; in the violent Commotions of State, as in it's moſt ſedate Tranquility: When we can with the ſame Temper receive a Diſappointment and Succeſs, a Defeat and Victory, the Death of Children as their Birth, the ſafe arrival of a Ship in Harbour that is fraighted with our Wealth, or the Account

count of it's being foundred at Sea or taken; the Devaſtation of our Houſes and Goods, or their Preſervation; the Conſumption of our Herds and Flocks by a Murrein, or any other Caſualty, or their proſperous increaſe; Baniſhment and Impriſonment of our Perſons, as the enjoyment of our Country and Liberty; the Sentence of Death or the Grant of Life.

This in many Particulars, was that equal Behaviour for which *Job* was renowned, and in which he is propounded to us for an Example. And ſuch a Carriage is the fulleſt Evidence imaginable of our poſſeſſing our Souls in the moſt perfect meaſure of Patience; to which, whether we can attain or not, we ought to aſpire and contend for it. And ſomething like this was that frame of Mind which the Heathen Writers would have us believe the froward *Xantippe* could not chooſe but admire and extol in her Husband *Socrates*, while ſhe beheld in him the ſame unalter'd Viſage at his returning home as at his going abroad; which might very well be, if as the Orator repreſents it, There was no change in his Mind to make any in the Air of

Cicc. Tuſcul. 3.

his Countenance: But that which kept his Mind even and unvariable, was his Patience which had the guard of it.

These Descriptions may possibly be of too large a Circuit to be adapted and appropriated to this single Vertue of Patience only, since they seem likewise to involve and comprehend the Notions of Moderation, Constancy and Firmness of Mind. If therefore we would accurately distinguish and separate this Vertue of Patience from these which have such a Neighbourhood and near relation with it, and limit and bound it within it's just terms, we may define it, forasmuch as it's proper Object is Adversity, to be a suffering Affliction without Preturbation; or a bearing the Evils which may be intentionally done us, or without the designed Malice of our Enemies may in the course of our Lives befall us, with an evenness of Mind.

Arguments to show the necessity of Patience under Afflictions, or represent the Advantages of it.

§ 4. The Arguments which may serve to evince that we ought to have our Souls thus armed and fortify'd against the strokes of Adversity; or that upon such an occasion we ought to support our selves with the Exercise of this Vertue, are many; where-

of

of the firſt that I ſhall produce ſhall be framed by way of Remonſtrance of the Inconveniences and Miſchiefs proceeding from the contrary Vice of Impatience, ſuch as will ſufficiently recommend this to our Practice: As an ill Face repreſented together with a good one, ſets off the Beauties and Graces of this to Advantage.

Arg. 1. Impatience being the Original of all our ills, lets us underſtand the Benefits of Patience.

This was the Original Sin of *Lucifer*, that bright Son of the Morning, and of thoſe Troops of Angels that aſſociated with him. It was his Impatience to endure a Superiour, though that Superiour was his God; and theirs, to abide in thoſe Stations his Wiſdom placed them in, though they were eminent ones, which cauſed him and them to rebel; as that wicked and unſucceſsful Attempt occaſioned his and their being depoſed and thrown down from the higheſt Region of Light into the loweſt Abyſs of Darkneſs.

And as this Impiety has firſt brought on his own, ſo it inſtigated him to compaſs Mankinds Miſery. His peeviſh regretting his own calamitous Fall, and an envious diſguſt he took at Man's Felicity while innocent, and at his ample Power, who had the whole lower World

World ſubject to him, and all things in it put under his Feet, ſet him forthwith upon contriving, and hurried him impetuouſly on to work the ruine of ſo noble a Creature. For could he have endured without Grief and repining to have beheld him in that Orb of Greatneſs and Happineſs, he had never endeavoured the degrading him from the one, or deſpoiling him of the other. His Malice took its Riſe from his Impatience to ſee that Excellency in another of which he himſelf was deprived, and his Impatience encreas'd and enrag'd his Malice.

And it was this Diſtemper which diſpoſed our firſt Progenitors to receive that fatal Wound which Satan had by that Temptation prepared to give their Felicity, and ours in them. For had our common Mother but with Patience reſiſted his Onſet, and oppoſed the Importunity of his Enticements; had ſhe but perſevered in her Obedience to her Makers Command, ſhe had remain'd ſafe and ſecure; or had ſhe been afterwards qualified with this Vertue, ſhe had not derived the Contagion of Sin and Miſery upon our great Father.

But

But reſtleſs until ſhe had ſhown him the goodly forbidden Fruit, and diſburthen'd her ſelf of all the fair Story the glozing Serpent told her of it's Vertue, and unladed it in his Ears, ſhe drew him in alſo into the ſame Condemnation.

Cain's Murther of his Brother proceeded from his Impatience, which could not bear God's Acceptance of *Abel*'s Sacrifice before his own.

Eſau's Loſs of his Birth-right, and in that of the Priviledge of being Prieſt to the moſt High God, came from the Impatience of an incenſed Appetite, not otherwiſe to be pacified than with a Meſs of his Younger Brothers Pottage, though this Satisfaction was not to be procured on eaſier and cheaper Terms than the parting with the Bleſſing.

The general and ordinary Sin which provoked God to deſtroy the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, with divers Plagues, and ſundry kinds of Death, was their murmuring againſt him, and his Conduct of them by the hands of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, at every Stage and almoſt every ſtep of their Journey. And what was this, but the Expreſſion of their Impatience.

Their

Their Infidelity and Diſtruſt in particular, while diſtreſſed for want of
Exod. 17. 1, 2, 3. Water at *Rephidim*, they did not only mutiny againſt theſe Leaders for having brought them out of the Land of *Egypt* to kill them, their Children and Cattle with Drought, but withall
47. queſtioned his Providence, — *Is the Lord among us or not?* was the effect of their Impatience.

Exod. 32. Their making a Calf at *Horeb* muſt be attributed to the ſame Cauſe, which would not ſuffer them to attend *Moſes* his coming down from the Mount with directions from God concerning his Worſhip, and the manner of it.

A Defection from God now, which is generally committed when Men are preſſed on every ſide, and are brought to a kind of deſpairing of Relief, what is it but a want of Patience, and of holding the Confidence of our Hope faſt unto the end? And hath not the uſing of unlawful means to bring us out of Dangers and Troubles when they beſet us the ſame Original, the not patiently waiting upon the Lord to make good his Promiſes, and give us deliverance out of them all in his due ſeaſon?

And

And as Impatience was and is the Fountain and Source of Evil, or rather Evil it ſelf, is but the Impatience of Good: ſo is Patience on the other ſide of all Vertue, and every good Action is but the inſtance of our Patience and Obedience. He who is ready to ſuffer patiently, or does ſubmit to God's Diſpoſal of him and all his Concerns, the Inflictions and Chaſtiſements laid on him by the Divine Hand, will never diſpute his Commands, but ſtands prepared to comport with every ſignification of his Will; while on the other ſide, he that repines at his Condition, frets and chafes himſelf at what befalls him contrary to his Mind, will always think the Yoak of Chriſt too heavy and cumberſom for him to wear, his Croſs too troubleſom for him to take up and carry, his Diſcipline too rigid to be obſerved.

S. 4. § 3. *Arg.* 2. Patience the Principle of all Vertue.

Of Obedience.

An Inſtance or two will make the Dependance of other Vertues upon this of Patience, or the requiſiteneſs of this towards the Exerciſe of them plain.

That Charity which conſiſts in forgiving Offences cannot be without it; for it's very unlikely we ſhould forgive Offences,

Of Charity in forgiving.

Offences, yea, though repeated Seventy and Seven times o'er, to the Perſon who thus inceſſantly injures us; nay, I may ſay it is impoſſible, unleſs we firſt inure our ſelves to bear them patiently; for if we are provoked by them to Anger, that unleſs immediately allay'd, is apt to ſwell into Rancour, and that if not cured or ſuppreſſed, to break out into Revenge.

Of Charity in diſpenſing Alms.

Nor can that other ſort of Charity, which ſupplies the wants of the needy, be any more without it: For he who cannot bear the leaſt blaſting of his Eſtate when God blows upon it, the ſmalleſt Diminution when it is the Divine Pleaſure to impair it, will hardly have the generous Courage to put his hand to the heap of Wealth he hath amaſs'd together, and take ſuch Sums thence which will ſerve towards the liberal and plentiful relief of the Indigent. He who hath not the Heart to bear launcing by a Chyrurgion when it is for his Health, will never venture to run a Sword through his own Bowels, and ſo boldly dare to die.

We

We cannot chaſtiſe our Bodies with Watchings and Faſtings, (and yet there are Offices that by our Chriſtian Religion ought many times to be practiſed in order to the keeping under our Bodies, and ſubduing the Fleſh to the Spirit) nor be inſtant in Prayer, caſting our ſelves thereat upon our Knees, or our Faces to the Ground, (which yet the Son of God out of a profound Reverence of his Father's awful Greatneſs did in his Supplications in the Garden, recommending by that Example of his to us the haughty Sons of *Adam*, the humbleſt Geſture in the performance of that Duty) unleſs we have the Patience to endure Hunger, want of Sleep, hard lying, or the like; for by the uſe of theſe we muſt be prepared to go through all the Rigours and Auſterities of a ſevere Diſcipline, in which every Combatant who would get the Maſtery of his Luſts, and ſtrive lawfully, ſo as to gain the Crown of Life, ought more or leſs to exerciſe himſelf. Of Mortification.

I'll add farther, It's unlikely we ſhould confeſs Jeſus Chriſt before Men (which yet we are bound to do) when upon that account we ſhall in all likelyhood run Of Confeſſion.

run the danger of Impriſonment, Torture, Baniſhment) or that we ſhould lay down our Lives for his Names ſake, (which yet in Preparation and Reſolution of Mind we ought daily to do) if we cannot endure the Melancholy of a Receſs, a Confinement, the being reſtrained or barred from Company, the Aches of a ſlight Wound, the Pains of a Diſeaſe that is neither acute nor mortal.

S. 4. § 3. *Arg.* 3. *n.* 1. No Calamity ſo heavy, but may be born with Patience.

(3.) No Evils are ſo great, or can our Condition be rendred ſo calamitous by them, but that the one and other may be born with Patience; and ſo the ſeeſibleneſs of the Duty is a Perſwaſive to the performance of it.

As no Happineſs is abſolutely perfect here below; for either thoſe goods in which we place them do not ſpring up at the ſame time and flouriſh together, or they are not all enjoy'd by one Perſon: This Man who flows in Riches, being of a mean Blood; that Nobly deſcended, but having his Birth obſcured by Poverty: A Third dieth rich, and of a noble Extraction too, but wanting an Heir to convey his Eſtate and Honours to: A Fourth having Children to leave them to, but whoſe Crimes blot

V. *Boeth. de Conſolat. l.* 2. *Pro.* 4.

blot their Eſcutcheons, and are the Diſgraces of their Fathers Houſe, as well as their Grief] ſo there is no Extreme of compleat Miſery: Poverty may have that Health annex'd to it, which rich Men want; or that leiſure which Men in Place, and therefore in Buſineſs, have not; and the Man whoſe Riſe is ignoble, may be illuſtrious by his Virtue and Abilities; (as *Cicero*, who was an *Arpinate*, was the greateſt Maſter of the *Roman* Eloquence, and one of her ableſt Stateſmen) may by his praiſeworthy Deeds be his own Herald, and may reflect a Light upon his obſcure Anceſtors. He who is deſtitute of all worldly Goods and Friends may have God for his Portion, and Guide and Guardian; and on whom the Angry World frowns, he may lift up the Light of his Countenance. As Nature hath made nothing of ſo rank and poyſonous a quality, which is not uſeful to ſome good purpoſe, (ſome of the moſt Soverein Medicines being extracted out of Poyſons reckon'd the moſt mortal) even ſo by Wiſdom ſuch is it's Alchymy, and ſuch is the Subjection of all Humane Affairs and Accidents to it's Skill, Good may be drawn out of Evil,

Advantage and Profit from Diſaſters, and Comfort from Calamities.

No Man's Miſery, I may ſafely affirm, was ever ſo violent and laſting, as not to afford him ſome Intervals of Reſt: Nor did ever any ſuffer under ſo acute and continued a Pain, as not to have ſome reſpite and Breathing-time. The Waters of *Marah*, the bitter Waters of Sorrow never flowed in ſo faſt or ſo high upon any Souls, but that ſome time or other the Tyde turned, and they ebb'd as faſt back again, and ſank full as low.

No one's Life was e'er o'ercaſt with ſuch a Blackneſs and Sadneſs, but that Light and Gladneſs broke through the Clouds, and for a Seaſon at leaſt diſpelled all his thick Melancholly. As *Solinus* reports, there is ſcarce a day ſo gloomy in the Iſle of *Rhodes*, [and *Seneca* ſays the ſame of the City of *Syracuſe*] in which the Sun is not at ſome time or other clearly viſible in that Horizon.

There is in every Man's Age a time for Laughter as well as for Sorrow, a time for clapping the Hands as well as for wringing them together; a time for taking up the Harp, the Lute, the Viol, and

and ſinging to them with the Voice of Melody, as well as for laying aſide theſe Inſtruments of Muſick, and uttering the Voice of Lamentation and Mourning, or the doleful Accents of Sighs and Groans. The moſt adverſe part of our Lives is commonly ſweetned with ſome Temperament of Proſperity: And God in his Infinite goodneſs hath thought fit to make ſuch an alternation of Miſery and Happineſs, and Happineſs and Miſery in Humane ſtate, hath ſo ſet Day againſt Night, and Night againſt Day; Summer againſt Winter, and Winter againſt Summer; the Calm againſt a Tempeſt, and the Tempeſt againſt a Calm; Serene againſt Cloudy, and Cloudy againſt Serene Weather; that we ſhould neither be melted into Softneſs by having too much Sun-ſhine, nor be broken in pieces by being toſs'd in a long or violent a Storm; that neither ways we ſhould be unmann'd; that the feeling the ſtroke of Adverſity, and lying under it, might the better commend the ſweetneſs of Proſperity to our enjoyment; and the interweaving or intermixing the Pleaſures of this, might make the hardſhip of that more tole-

rable; or to ſhew his own loving kindneſs and mercy in cheriſhing us with the one, as well as his Severity in diſciplining us with the other.

This was the Literal Sence of that Figurative Repreſentation mentioned by *Plutarch* and *Max. Tyrius*, with ſome ſmall Variation of one from the other, that there were in *Jupiter*'s Palace two Caſques which he pierced and drew of as he ſaw occaſion, the one of good, the other of bad Fate; or the one of acceptable, the other of diſpleaſing Preſents.

This is what the obſerving Preacher hath declared, That God hath ſet the Day of Proſperity againſt the Day of Adverſity, the one againſt the other, that Man ſhould find nothing after him. *i. e.* No juſt Cauſe to complain of the inequality of his Proceeding, nothing to blame or tax in his Conduct.

Eccleſ. 7. 14. Καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο Ἀνάλογον τούτῳ ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ μὴ εὑρεῖν ἄνθρωπον κατ' αὐτοῦ μεμψίν.

Lat. Ut non inveniat homo contra eum juſtas querimonias.

Vetablus ita explicat אחרין à noſtro interprete redditum.

And the Son of *Sirach* in theſe terms; that the Works of the Lord are two and two, and he hath one againſt

gainſt another; Good againſt Evil, and Life againſt Death. Eccleſ. 19. 33. 14, 15.

This is likewiſe the Sence of that myſtical Saying of *Zophar*, That the Secrets of God's Wiſdom are double, *i. e.* His Providence hath a double Aſpect, a favourable and an angry one on Humane Affairs, which he changeth according to the different Exigency which is in them. *Job* 11. 6. *La providenza Divina ha due facce, di rigore e di clemenza; temperato è vorrato ſecundo la neceſſita de figluoli di Dio in queſta vita Diod. in loc.*

It is the Note of *Theophraſtus*, which may be very applicable to this matter, that the Frame and Conſtitution of the Univerſe is nothing elſe but a Combination of Centuries, of Good and Evil in Equal Proportions; or rather, with ſome odds, and the Predominancy of Evil.

And it is the Obſervation of the Judicious *Philip Comines*, that God hath created nothing in this World, neither Man nor Beaſt, without an Enemy to hold him in fears. *Comin.* l. 5. c. 10.

Heraclitus his Principle contained as much as this, if not more, That all things were made and are kept up by Contention. The Winds and Element conflict with one another, and ſo do the Seaſons; and the iſſue of this War is Alternative. V. *Petrarcha. præf. ad* 2 l. *de remedutriuſq; fort. latè exequente in hoc Heraclitiprincipium.*

Job 2. 10. The juſt Reflection which *Job* made in his Miſery on this Alternation, that he who then ſo ſorely handled him, was the ſame God who e're while had ſo obligingly careſſed him, diſpoſed him to ſuſtain the heavy load of it with Patience; aud ſupply'd him with a ready and very reaſonable Anſwer to return his Wife, when ſhe urged his Curſing God for Afflicting him. *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh Women ſpeaketh, Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and ſhall we not receive evil?* As much as if he had ſaid, (St. *Baſil* being allowed to be your Paraphraſt) Call to remembrance the good things thou once enjoyedſt, and weigh them againſt the Evil thou now ſuffereſt; conſider thy former Affluence, and let that be Balance to thy preſent Wants; ſet thy former Joys againſt thy preſent Sadneſs; compare the diſturb'd and mudded Puddle thou drinkeſt of now with the clear running Streams, whoſe Waters refreſhed thee heretofore; and thence learn this Leſſon, That the courſe of this Life is like that of a River, ſome part whereof is glided by already, ſome is now flowing by; ſome is ſtill to run into the great Abyſs

S. *Baſil.* Orat. 13.

Abyſs of Eternity, as that empties and looſeth it ſelf in the Ocean; that thou art not to expect it ſhould keep the ſame even tenour in all it's parts, be all of a piece, all alike, clear and ſhining; no more than thou canſt look that a River ſhould every where and at all times preſerve the ſame gentle Flow, or the ſame Silver or Chryſtalline Colour: No; it is only the Divine Life, which hath no Succeſſion of parts, no Intervals to divide it, that continues at one and the ſame ſtay of perpetual and immutable Happineſs.

But if it were poſſible that in ſome one Perſons Life there ſhould be no ſuch Interval of Joy to divide, no ſuch Parentheſis to break off his Grief, and that he could not ſupport himſelf with any reaſonable Confidence, *That as God had torn him, he would heal him; as he had ſmitten him, ſo he would bind him up*; yet he might comfort himſelf with this Conſideration, that it could not be of very long durance, and that would in ſome degree lighten the Burthen when it ſat cloſeſt to him. Hoſ. 6. 1.

It cannot be longer liv'd than himſelf, whoſe Age extended ro the fartheſt, is but a Span long, and Death the

end of that Span, which with that muſt put an end to his Miſery alſo. The Pſalmiſt comforts himſelf with this; and that God would ſet him at reſt at the end of this Span, if not before it; And *now Lord what wait I for? my hope is in thee.* For that is the Port where all ride ſafe, even they who have been toſſed moſt in a tempeſtuous Sea.

Pſal. 39. 5.

The Grave is the place where the *weary are at reſt, the Priſoners hear not the voice of the Oppreſſor*, the Servant is free from his Maſter; where all compoſed to ſtillneſs, ſleep quietly on Beds of Duſt, ſecure from Violence, and undiſturb'd with waking Pains and Cares. *There he that died in the bitterneſs of his Soul, and never eat with pleaſure, ſhall alike lie down in the duſt with him who died in his full ſtrength, being at eaſe and quiet.*

Job 3. 18, 19, 20.

Job 21. 22, 23, 24.

But if Death be not the end of Humane Life, as by our Chriſtian Faith we are perſwaded it is not; if it be not the wearied Pilgrims utmoſt Stage, yet it's the way which without any further toyl leads him to Happineſs; the very Gate which opens upon it; his Friendly Guide, which conducts him to Manſions

ſions of Immortal Glory; his kind Benefactor, which gives him actual poſſeſſion of them; inſtates aud ſettles him in them: So that if weeping endure for a night, (the ſhort night of our ſojourning here; a Night o'ercaſt with Darkneſs rather than a Day; the Shadow of Death rather than the Light of Life) yet Joy cometh in the Morning; the Morning of our Souls Birthday, in which, diſcharged from the Sepulchre of their Bodies, they begin firſt truly to live; or in the Morning of the Reſurrection, in which our Bodies ſhall ſpring up again, like the tender Herb impregnated by the Morning Dew, and quickened with a vital warmth from it's Mother Earth, and flouriſh in a never-fading Verdure. Add beſides, that as no Temptation can befal us, but what is common to Men, and that it's leſs than Childiſhneſs to lament with a Woe and Alas, when we ſuffer the common Incidents of Mortality, and that Death which cannot be at a long Diſtance from any, will put a Period to them; ſo God *who is faithful, will not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the temptation provide* 1 Cor. 10. 13.

vide a way to eſcape it, or one to bear it.

So born, it becomes lighter.

But let the weight of Miſery be what it will, it's Burthen as great as is imaginable, yet they are made lighter and our Condition under them eaſier, by ſupporting them with Patience, which is a farther encouragement to the doing this: I might ſay, comparing it with the new load Impatience adds, and the uneaſineſs that creates, it alters the nature of ſuffering, changes Pain, and Torment into Pleature, Affliction, into Recreation, Judgment into Kindneſs and Mercy.

For it's not the Stroke, while we are ſmitten by God, or lie under his correcting hand, ſo much as our froward Carriage, that cauſeth the ſmart. This makes the Stripes look angry and inflamed; this envenoms, feſters and rancours them; as the wounded Deer, the more he ſtirrs, the more the Arrow which pierced his ſides galls him.

The Burthen, the Yoak, the Croſs, the utmoſt harſhneſs and ſharpneſs with which God diſciplines us here born with an even quiet mind, become light, ſoft and gentle.

Very

Very uſe and cuſtom in ſuffering have power enough not only to qualifie, but to alter the nature of it, and render it well nigh grateful; whence we may rationally conclude, that a patient Submiſſion to the wiſe and gracious Will of the Impoſer may be able to work the ſame; yea, a ſtronger Effect, and introduce a nobler degree of change. *Cic. 3. Tuſcul.*

For thus it hath been obſerved, that Slaves who have ſigh'd deeply when they were firſt condemned to the Galleys, have ſometime after ſung, while being chained they tugged at their Bank of Oars; that Men who were afraid at firſt to put out to Sea in a Calm, have by frequenting it learn'd to laugh in Storms; that ſuch unfortunate Wretches, who ſentenced to work in the Mines, have been fain to be driven and goaded on as it were to their laborious Task (ſo reluctant was their Nature to the Service at firſt) have within ſome compaſs of time after wrought in them with as much chearfulneſs, as if they had been the abſolute Lords and Maſters of all the rich Oar they digged up; that ſuch miſerable Slaves, who doom'd to the Fencing School, have hung back as if they had been going

going to the Slaughter-house to have been butchered immediately; after a little inuring themselves to the bloody Combats there exhibited, have not so much as cried, Oh! when fighting a Prize they themselves have been mortally wounded; or so much as changed Colour, or shrunk in their Neck, when fell'd to the Ground, their Antagonist's Weapon was at their Throat.

The Noble *Spartan* Youths, when according to their Country's severe Discipline instituted to harden them, they were scourged at the Altar till the Blood streamed out, yea, sometimes till they died under their Stripes, were so far from roaring out, that they fetch'd not a Groan.

And now shall not Persons of mature Age and Judgment behave themselves as decently in the point of enduring Pain, as raw Boys or green Youths? Or shall not Reason sway us as powerfully in this as Usage did them? Or shall not Religion and Grace work as effectually in us as ever Reason or Custom did or can?

Besides Time it self abates the strongest Calamity, tames the most stubborn and obstinate Grief: And is it fit we

should

ſhould be beholden to Time to do that for us, which we might do our ſelves, *i. e.* to put an end to our Sorrow? Shall we ſtay for that to do this without our Wills, which we ought to do of our own accord? Why ſhould we not rather by wiſe Conſiderations ſnatch the Glory of this from Time, and out of Prudence ſurceaſe from that which length of days will oblige us to?

Certainly if ſuch be the prevailing Force of Cuſtom or Time as to alleviate Afflictions, a quiet bearing them upon a juſt Eſtimate of their Nature, that they are never intrinſecally Evil, and often operative of Good, may be reaſonably concluded to be more powerful to effect this, or even to change their Quality, eſpecially when beſides it's own Vertue compleatly adequate to this Service, it ſhall have the the Aſſiſtance of Time to produce it.

(4.) The Advantages accruing from poſſeſſing our Souls in Patience may be another Argument to induce us to do ſo. For the Evils we ſuffer are either

S. 4. § 4. *Arg.* 4. Illuſtrated by Patience turn to good Account, whereby Impatience renders imaginary ones real, and augments real ones.

not

not real, or more in Imagination than Truth, But whether true, or whether they lie in Opinion meerly, they may always by bearing them patiently, which is the making the right use of them, turn to good Account. This Vertue is the best Defensative against the Lashes of a malignant Tongue, or the rude Blows of the hand of Violence when it is lifted up to strike, or the foot of Pride to spurn at us, that they do us no mischief. This covers us against all the Engines and Instruments of Malice, or renders us invulnerable from them; and that not by working a *Stoical* Apathy in us, by bereaving us of our Senses, eradicating our Affections, dispoyling us of Humanity, stupifying us into Stocks, hardening us into Stones or Adamants, leaving us in the mean time only the Figure of Men; but by introducing an imperturbation of Mind when we have the greatest Provocations to disquiet us, and are the most sensible of them.

Fortify'd with this, all the poysoned Arrows of Slander and Reproach which are directed, all the Weapons of Destruction which are levelled against us, will be no more able to hurt us, than

Darts

Darts thrown againſt a Brazen Wall; nay, like them they will recoyl back upon the injurious Contrivers of them, and wound them; the Shafts of Adverſity will be ſo far from piercing this Coat of Mail, that it will repel them back with greater Force than they came; by it we are not only made impregnable againſt Diſaſters, but more than Conquerors over them.

Whereas Impatience under Wrongs and Indignities makes us quit the Field to the Aſſailants who offer them; put the Victory into thoſe Enemies hands, and give them the opportunity to triumph and inſult over us. For without peradventure they intended by them to diſcompoſe and moleſt, to vex and fret us, and we unwiſely by Impatience concur with and gratifie them in their deſign, fairly ſuffer, or rather aſſiſt them to get their Ends by diſturbing our ſelves. *Tertul. ibid. Jo. Bona manud. ad Cœlum. c. 7. § 5.*

While the not taking notice of their Injuries would be a ſufficient revenging our ſelves upon them; for they propounded to themſelves in doing them the grieving of us; which if they ſee they cannot affect, they will torment them-

themſelves with Anguiſh for the miſcarriage of their Deſign.

The poyſonous Tongue of the Slanderer, inſtead of blackning and cankring, may brighten and poliſh our Reputation, if we will not heed his Calumnies.

Ariſtippus underſtood this well, when he made no other Reply to one who had rail'd bitterly upon him, and thought to provoke him, but this, *It's in your power to ſpeak ill of me, but in mine to bear it quietly.* And *Socrates*, who meeting *Ariſtophanes* that had expoſed and ridiculed him as much as he could upon the Stage, inſtead of being incens'd at him for this ill uſe, ask'd him only, *If he had occaſion to uſe him again to any ſuch like purpoſe of Buffoonry?*

Other Ills likewiſe, as we term them, may turn to our Advantage, and upon that conſideration ought to be ſupported with Patience.

Diſeaſes which impair our Health for the preſent, may ſecure and confirm it for the future. The loſs of Riches, which if they conſiſt in Gold and Silver, we ought to conſider as the ſame kind of Earth we tread under our feet, hatch'd

hatch'd meerly to a higher degree of fineneſs by a greater heat of the Sun, and purified o'er and o'er in the Furnace; if in Stones we call precious, we ought to look upon as of the ſame Nature with thoſe which pave our Streets, only more brightned by a favourable Sun, and afterwards poliſhed by Art) may be the occaſion of gaining us the true Treaſure of Wiſdom. *Crates* on this account threw away his Wealth as an incumbrance, with which his Mind could not be ſo free, as otherwiſe it would, for Study and Contemplation. And *Ariſtippus* is ſaid to have done ſomething like it, meerly for Diſpatch. And one of the Sages of Antiquity termed that Tempeſt and Shipwrack a happy one, by which he was caſt upon ſo ſound a ſhore as the Study of Philoſophy. Troubles and Croſſes afford us the occaſion for the Exerciſe of our Vertues; yea, inaugurate and conſecrate them ſuch. Without Dangers there would be no proof of a Soldiers Courage, or a Generals Conduct and Preſence of Mind; unleſs the Sea was rocky and ſhelvy, and ſometimes boyſterous withal, the Skill of the Pilot was not to be ſeen; except the Courſe

Philoſtr. Vi. Apollon.

Horat. l. 2. Ser. 3.

was long, the Racers Swiftneſs was not to be diſcerned; nor can Greatneſs nor Bravery of Spirit be ſhewed, where there are no Calamities to conteſt with and ſurmount; without Difficulties to Maſter, Faith would be no ſuch commendable Grace; and unleſs there were appearances enough to ſtagger us, Hope would loſe it's Reputation; were there no Injuries to provoke our Anger, there would be no place for Meekneſs; or none big enough to incenſe us to revenge, there would be no room for Charity to beſtow her Pardon: In ſhort, were there no Temptations to combat, there would be no Warfare for a Chriſtian to engage in here, he could not be called a Soldier without an Abuſe, nor would there be any triumphing for him hereafter; there would be no Martyrs, nor Crowns for them, without Perſecution, and the enduring it. The Tryal of our Faith by Fire, is that it may be found unto Peace, and *Honour, and Glory, at the appearance of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. 1. 7.

Beſides, as our Virtues become conſpicuous by being exerciſed, ſo are they rendred purer for it, as Gold is for being tried in the Furnace. (For there are

are ſome Spots which ſtain them, as are not to be got out but by the Fire of Affliction) and grow ſtronger and more confirm'd, as Trees ſettle and take the deeper Root for being ſhaken by the Wind; and the more fragrant, as Gums and Spices do, for being beat and pounded.

To this purpoſe is the Remarque of one of *Plato*'s School on *Jupiter*'s Exerciſing *Ulyſſes* with all manner of dangers from *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, a *Palamede* and an *Ajax*, the unhoſpitable *Thracians* and maſſie *Cyclops*, the Enchantments of *Circe* and the Fury of Tempeſts, with wandring and Poverty, that his Deſign in all this was to make and approve him good. *Max. Tyr. Diſſ.* 2.

The like is obſerv'd by him of Engaging *Hercules* in ſo many Labours and Hazards againſt wild Beaſts, Monſters of Men, Tyrants, and the like, it was to make him a perfect Hero; and that without ſuch Adventures, ſome ſuch Difficulties to cope with, Vertue woud be crampt and diſabled. *Ælian* makes the Remarks, That the moſt renowned Worthies which the *Grecian* Hiſtory hath furniſh'd the World with, were extremely poor: And I dare ſay, the *Æl. l.* 11. *c.* 9. & 43. *Var. Hiſt.*

most illustrious for Piety in Sacred History have been the most eminent in Sufferings.

Though it be not in our power to dispose of our selves and Affairs as pleaseth our Humour best; and it's well the goodness of God hath put it out of our Power, because the choice we might make for our selves might be extreamly pernicious; yet it's within our power, aided by his Grace, to steer through the most disagreeable Condition with Patience

As he who plays at Tables: (For to this Game *Plato*, and others from him, have compared the Life of Men) cannot throw what Cast he will; but yet he may, if he hath skill, manage the most unlucky one, so as it shall be to the least Disadvantage of his Game. If it be not within our Sphere to prevent Misfortunes, as we foolishly miscall all sinister Accidents, charging them upon Fortune, yet it's our own fault if we are miserable under them.

But the bearing any Calumny impatiently and frowardly, which we had not the power (if we had the foresight) to prevent, as it's the greatest Gratification we can make our Enemies, who

who were the occaſion of bringing it upon us; becauſe their Malice intended it for a Vexation to us, but could not effect their Deſign without our contributing our own pernicious Aid, and diſordering our ſelves thereat, ſo it increaſes the Sharpneſs of it, and makes our Miſery only the more intolerable; as Birds that unfortunately light upon Twiggs dawb'd with Bird-lime, the more they flutter, the more the viſcous matter ſpreads it ſelf o'er their Wings, and the leſs ſerviceable they render them for that Flight they would be at.

Afflictions are oft-times deſigned by God as Preparatives to a great meaſure of Happineſs and high degree of Glory in this World; but ſhall moſt certainly, if ſuſtained with Patience and an entire Reſignation of our ſelves to God's Will, for a Rewardbe Crowned with both thoſe in the World to come; and therefore upon this Reflection we ought thus to ſupport our ſelves under them. Thus as to the firſt caſe; *Joſeph*'s Dungeon made the way for his Aſcent to the higheſt ſtep of Honour next the Throne. The *Egyptian* Bondage opened the Door for Gen. 39. 1, 2, 3, 4

the *Israelites* glorious Deliverance; the Red Sea and Wilderness were the Passage which led them into a Country flowing with Wine and Oyl, Milk and Honey. *Daniel*'s Captivity, and *Mordecai*'s Contempt withal, were the occasions, if not the means, of their Advancement to the Supreme Ministry of their Masters Affairs.

Esth. 10. 2.

The low Estate of the Virgin *Mary*, and her yet lower Opinion of her self, were dispositions which fitted her for the subsequent Honour of being the Mother of her own and our common Saviour *. St. *John*'s Solitude and Sequestration from the World in *Patmos*, prepared him for conversing with God, and receiving from him by Revelation an account of the future Estate of the Church.

* *Iren. l. 3. adv. hær. c. 30.*

And so in Secular History *Marius* his Prison-door opened upon his Consulship. And *J. Cæsar*'s being taken by Pyrats was preparitory to his Sovereign Command.

As to the Second, that it shall be so, we may securely depend on the truth of God's Promises, which are to this purpose, That a Seed-time of Tears shall be followed with a plenteous Harvest

veſt of Exultation. *They that ſow in tears ſhall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, and beareth precious ſeed, ſhall doubtleſs come again with rejoycing, bringing his Sheaves with him.* Pſal. 126. 5. & 6.

That Deſolation and Deſtitution of Comforts now, ſhall then be recompenſed with pure and chaſt Delights. Chriſt came to *appoint to them that mourn in Sion.* What? even to give them *Beauty for Aſhes, Joy for Mourning, the Garment of Praiſe for the Spirit of Heavineſs, i. e.* Decking and Ornaments for the Aſhes they caſt upon their Heads, or roll'd themſelves in, Odors and Perfumes for the ill Smells which uſually accompany neglectful Sadneſs; Robes of Eſtate, or the Attire of high Feſtivals for ſordid Rayment. This hath been thought by ſome to have been one Spiritual meaning, of God's Promiſe to his Afflicted People by ſome Prophet; (for the Spirit ſpake not only in variety of Tongues by the Apoſtles, but of Sence likewiſe by thoſe whom he inſpired.) *For Braß I will bring Gold, and for Iron Silver, and for Wood Braß, and for ſtones Iron*; that weeping now ſhall be converted into Laughter then, and Mourn- Iſa. 61. 3. Iſa. 60. 7.

Luke 6.21 ing exchanged with Joy. *Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh.*
Mat. 5. 24. *Blessed are they that mourn, for they*
John 16. 20, 22. *shall be comforted. Ye shall be sorrowful, but your Sorrow shall be turned into Joy*; turn'd into an indefectible, unalienable one; so the following Words imply, *and your joy no man taketh from you.* And this Property, that it is not liable to Violence, makes it clean of another Condition from any sort of enjoyment here.

For our Treasure may be taken away by Thieves and Robbers, our Estate and good Name by False Witnesses, our Life and Honour may be forfeited, our Lands and Goods confiscated, our Power may have a mighty Declension or Full Period, our Glory a Wane or Ebb, or else a total Eclipse, our Strength and Beauty be a Prey to Diseases, or else most certainly to Time to consume. But no Hand, no Tongue, no Power, no Fraud, no, nor devouring Time can rob or spoil us of this Joy when we shall be once possessed of it.

V. S. *Chrysost. hom. 16 in Jo. T. 2. p. 620. ed. Savil.*

That Paved Work of Sapphire-stone on which God set his feet when he
Exod. 24. 11. shew'd himself to *Moses*, *Nadab* and *Abihu* in the Mount, or Sapphire-brick,

as

as *Lyra* and *Arias* have conceived it to be, hath been thought to have had this myſtical Signification, That God ſhould reward ſuch who are haraſs'd here by Afflictions, as the *Iſraelites* were in *Egypt* by making of Bricks, with Sapphires of Glory hereafter. I might add here, Afflictions are not ſo much the ordinary Road, as the only one which leads to Happineſs, but that I reſerve it for a diſtinct and peculiar Conſideration.

Lyra reddit opus Lateris Sapphirini, Arias opus lateris Sapphir.

(5.) The very Conſideration of the danger of Proſperity, if it be not born with Moderation, and the great Difficulty and almoſt Impoſſibility of ſo bearing it, will wonderfully contribute towards the ſupporting our ſelves under Adverſity with Patience.

S. 4. n. 5. The danger of Proſperity not born with Moderation, and the difficulty of bearing it ſo, will help toward the patient enduring Adverſity.

It's a Glorious and Heroick Act of Virtue to combat the Temptations of a happy Eſtate, as St. *Auguſtine* hath very well obſerved; and it's a rare and a well nigh ſingular Happineſs not to be overcome by them.

Its hard to flow in Pleaſures and Delights, and not to have our Minds ſoftned by them, or melted into Luxury; to have Honours heap'd upon us, and not to have our Brains turn'd round

round with them; to abound in Wealth, and not Idolize it; this is as hard, as to ſail in a Cock-boat with a Sheet aluff, and not be over-ſet. Its ſcarce poſſible to be at eaſe, and not to grow fowl in our Minds with Vice, as well as in our Bodies by an abundance of Humours which will gather there. Idleneſs and fullneſs of Bread ingendred in *Sodom* Pride, and that other Sin which is called by her Name. This is as little poſſible, as it is for Wine to ſtand in the ſame Veſſel that was filled from the Preſs without being rack'd off, and not to have Lees, or not to taſte of the Cask, if it was never tranſvaſated. *Moab, ſaith God by the Prophet*, denouncing her Tranſportation into Captivity, *hath been at eaſe from his youth up, and he hath ſetled upon his Lees, and hath not been emptied from Veſſel to Veſſel, neither hath he gone into Captivity. Therefore his taſte remained in him, and his ſcent is not changed.*

Ezech. 16. 49.

Jer. 48. 11.

Petrarch writing to *Azo*, an unfortunate but brave Prince of *Parma*, both for his Conſolation and Inſtruction, after he had conteſted the Opinion of *Ariſtotle*, That its harder to bear ſad and lamentable Accidents, than to abſtain

abſtain from Delights and Pleaſures. And that of *Seneca* to *Lucilius*, That it's a greater thing to wade through Difficulties, than to moderate ones ſelf in Succeſs and Proſperity, alledges for an Argument againſt them, the Paucity of thoſe who have put the Bridle on their Paſſions, and govern'd themſelves with Evenneſs when they have been afflicted. *I have ſeen many*, ſaid he, *who have born Loſſes, Poverty, Baniſhment, Impriſonment, Torments, Death, and Diſeaſes worſe than Death with Conſtancy; but I never yet ſaw any who in Wealth, and Honour, and Power kept the ſame equal Mind.*

Proſperity uſually makes us in the firſt place unmindful of God, and then ungrateful Rebels againſt him. *Jeſhurun (Iſrael) fed with honey out of the rock, butter of Kine and milk of Sheep, the fat of Lambs and Rams of the beſt and largeſt breed of* Baſhan, *the fat of the kidneys of Wheat, and the pure blood of the Grape, waxed fat, and kik'd againſt God, forſook him who made him, and lightly regarded the rock of his Salvation.* Deut. 32. 13, 14, 15.

A part of the ſame People, *viz. Judah*, when they were became great, and waxen rich, when they were fat and ſhined, Jer. 5. 27, 28.

shined, pass'd over the great Offices of Justice; judg'd not the Cause of the Fatherless, nor the right of the Widow. *Nebuchadnezzar* in his heighth forgat himself, and the hand of that Almighty Power which exalted him.

Dan. 4. 31. *Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of my Kingdom, by the might of my Power, and for the honour of my Majesty?* Nor did he recover a sound Mind, and a right sence of himself and things below, till he had been try'd in Affliction, till he had been turn'd a grazing with the Beasts of the Field.

It intoxicates and makes us drunk; and when it hath thus bereft us of our Reason, we degenerate into Fools, and with the Confidence of Fools, say, Our Hill is so strong, that it shall never be moved at any time, when by and by its overturned or swallowed up by an Earthquake. *Hannibal* wisely observed in the *Carthaginian* Senate, That Men seldom had good Fortune and a good Understanding together. And his Observation was no doubt grounded upon this Reason, That Mens Understandings are almost naturally (however generally) corrupted with Success.

Liv. Dic. 3 l. 30.

The

The wiſe Man from his manifold Experience hath predicted, that Deſtruction will be the inevitable Conſequence of Proſperity, when it happens to be the lot of Men who have not the Dexterity to make right uſe of it, and few there are that have it. *The Proſperity of Fools ſhall ſlay them.* Prov. 1. 23.

It ſmiles in our Faces, and gives us Promiſes and Aſſurances of her Conſtancy, and then treacherouſly deſerts us, and takes our Enemies part; blows fair for us, and immediately chops about to a quite contrary point; lulls us aſleep in a ſtate of Security, as *Dalilah* did *Samſon* on her Lap, and then as ſhe, after ſhe had awakened him, delivered him up into the hands of his cruel Enemies the *Philiſtines*; ſo this, when ſhe hath enervated us, rendred us ſo feeble, that we cannot ſtand againſt the lighteſt Fillip, gives us over to ſome of the rudeſt Shocks of Adverſity.

For Men dandled in the Arms of good Fortune, and conſtantly nouriſh'd with its Milk from their Infancy, as they are therefore the nearer to ſome great Alteration, and if wiſe, ought to apprehend themſelves to be in that danger,

ger, so are they the most unable to away with the smallest change of Dyet, or to bear the least degree of Calamity.

Had Felicity but this Inconvenience alone, that it lets a Person see but one half part of the World, and that the falsest, *viz.* Flatterers, and hides from his Knowledge the most valuable, or rather that which can never be valued enough, a true Friend; (for Troubles, and well-nigh only those open our Eyes, and afford us a true Light to discern between a meer Pretender to that Title, and one that is really such; and the Sincerity of Friendship, and it's Fineness, like that of Metals in Fire, is best tryed in the Furnace of Adversity) yet this were enough to make us afraid of it, as the occasion of of marvellous Mischiefs.

This is such an excellent part of Knowledge, that Philosophy appearing to *Boetius*, endeavoured to hold up his Spirit, ready to sink under the weight of his Misfortunes with this Consideration: *At what rate*, said she to him, expostulating and arguing the case, *would you have purchas'd this piece of Knowledge when you stood whole and entire*,

Boeth. de Consolat. l. 2. pro. 8.

tire, which you have gain'd by being broken and ruin'd? Ceaſe therefore your Grief, and ſilence your Complaints for your Loſſes, who by means of them have found the richeſt Treaſure, that of knowing your Friends. Had *Job* found his ſuch, he would not have deplored his Calamity at the rate he did; but this was the aggravation of it, that his Friends were deceitful; as Brooks cauſed by Winter Rains or Snow, which in warm Weather vaniſh, and are conſumed out of their places. Job 6. 15, 16, 17.

But beſides this Diſadvantage of keeping us in an ignorance of our true Friends, (over and above all thoſe already mentioned) Proſperity is a ſort of Divine Judgment, leading on to, or making the way for the final Ruine of Perſons and Nations. God denounceth it againſt his ſinful People as preparatory to their Deſtruction. For *Iſrael*'s ſliding back as a backſliding Heifer. He threatens by the Prophet *to feed them as a Lamb in a large place, i. e.* As Sheep are turned into rich Paſtures to fat them for Slaughter either in the Shambles, or at the Altar; ſo the Lord meant to ſend them an Affluence of all things according to their Hearts Hoſ. 4. 16. *Lyra & Sanct. in loc.*

Hearts deſire, as a Forerunner of the Devouring Sword which ſhould conſume them, or by which they ſhould fall unpitied and unregarded Sacrifices.

Heathens by meer natural Inſtinct have been apprehenſive of the danger of too much good Fortune, as they call'd it. *Theramenes* having eſcap'd the danger of being cruſh'd to pieces by the Fall of a Houſe in which he was, while his Companions were deſtroy'd under the Ruines of it, upon the firſt recollection with himſelf, cryed out amidſt the Congratulation of his Friends for his Preſervation, *O Fortune! for what and what dreadful ſeaſon doſt thou intend to reſerve me?* As if he had then foreboded his Fatal End, and that he was delayed only to be condemned to die in greater Torments.

Plut. de Conſol. ad Apol.

Philip of *Macedon* having received in one day the good News of the Birth of a Son, of a Victory his Army under *Parmenio* had gained over his Enemies the *Dardanians*, and of his Chariots having won the Prize in the *Iſthmian* Games, immediately fell to his Supplication, and prayed thus, *O my good Genius, ſend me ſome moderate miſfortune*

fortune to counterballance, or at leaſt to weigh down the Scale a little, which theſe Succeſſes have raiſed too high. As if he had then feared, and his Fears had made him prognoſticate, that without ſome ſuch Check or Allay to his Happineſs, his falling miſerably as he did by the revengeful Sword of *Pauſanias*, to whom he had refuſed Juſtice, could not be prevented. As it is one of the hardeſt Leſſons to be learnt, to deport ones ſelf well in Proſperity; ſo it is the moſt dangerous Eſtate, if we do not govern our ſelves by that Inſtruction.

See we a Man crown'd with Succeſs in his impious Undertakings, we are to compute, that God's Anger for this burns the hotter and fiercer againſt him, and collect thence, that he hath provoked and incenſed him to that degree, as that he will not vouchſafe the favour of puniſhing him; or that he will puniſh him to the higheſt degree, and of all others the moſt to be dreaded, by ſuffering him to proſper in his villanous Courſes.

Ephraim is joyned to Idols, let him alone, was a Reſolution taken up, or a Sentence paſs'd by God in his ſevere Diſpleaſure. And ſo was that other againſt Hoſ. 4. 17. Ezek. 16. 42.

Judah, I will make my fury towards thee to reſt, and my Jealouſie ſhall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry.

Aug. in Pſal. 7. Upon this St. *Auſtins* Advice is founded, That we ſhould gratulate no Man's Temporal Proſperity, that feels none of God's Vengeance in this Life; becauſe its a ſign that God's Wrath is the greater, and he hath irritated him to that height as to permit this; that he ſhould never be corrected by any of his Scourges.

S. *Greg. hom.* 12. on *Ezech.* That Saying of St. *Gregory*, That we are to regard ſuch Sinners as the moſt miſerable, whom we behold left alone, and abandoned as it were to their Crimes without a Rod to admoniſh them. As likewiſe that of St. *Bernard* is worth minding, God is moſt angry when he is not angry at all. *Let favour* (ſaith he) *be ſhewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteouſneſs. I would not have this mercy ſhewed me, this pity is beyond all anger.*

S. *Bernard Ser.* 42. *in Cant.*

Iſa. 26. 10.

Joh. 16. 20

Tertul. c. 13. *de Idololat.* *Tertullian* having reported from St. *John* thoſe Words of our Saviour to his Diſciples, *Ye ſhall weep and lament, but the world ſhall rejoyce*, makes this Collection thence, That if we rejoyce with

with the World now, it's to be feared we ſhall weep with it hereafter; and adviſeth us upon the proſpect of this, to entertain our preſent Miſery contentedly, and be willing to mourn while the World rejoyceth, that we may rejoyce when that mourns; becauſe if we rejoyce together now, we ſhall mourn together hereafter. *S. Hierom* ſaith, It's a fondneſs to expect to rejoyce here, and reign hereafter; and that it's impoſſible to reconcile the enjoyment of the good things of this Life, and another together. On the other hand, Affliction is the moſt ſignal Expreſſion of Kindneſs that God makes to thoſe who are his; the moſt effectual Remedy he applies to cure a Diſeaſe in his Beloved, when it is grown almoſt deſperate, to heal the wickedneſs of a Favourite People or Nation when it is become great and ſtrong. S. *Hierom. ad Heliodor.*

How pathetically kind is that Speech of his toward his own People the *Jews*. Therefore thus ſaith the Lord, *I will melt them and try them*, (i. e. in the Furnace of Affliction) *for what ſhall I do for the Daughter of my people?* What can I do more than Jer. 9. 7.

refine my People that no Droſs or Ruſt ſtick to them; and for this purpoſe to purge out theſe, what can I do other than uſe the Fire of Tribulation?

And how eloquent is that complaint he makes by the ſame Prophet, that he had uſed that extreme Remedy, uſed his Art in that kind; but all in vain. *The*
Jer. 6. 29. *Bellows are burnt, the Lead is conſumed of the Fire, the Founder melteth in vain, for the wicked are not pluck'd away.* As if he ſhould ſay, I have tryed my Skill, and employed my Pains; ſpent all the Inſtruments and Metals fit for refining you, and yet your Naughtineſs remains; that is not conſumed or waſted. His ceaſing to uſe this Remedy of trying or exerciſing by Afflictions is a ſign he deſpairs of curing that Perſon or Nation whom he thus for-
Iſa. 1. 5. bears. *Why ſhould you be ſtricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more,* which are the Words directed by God to the *Jews*, implies as much.

St. *Baſil. in loc. Eſai T. 2. p. 27. ad Pariſ.* It's the Note of St. *Baſil*, that when Men ſin ſo, that they are in a recoverable ſtate, God threatens to viſit their ſins with a Rod, and their Iniquities with Scourges; but when they are incurable, he expoſtulates thus,

Why

Why ſhould ye be ſmitten any more, who have felt all ſtrokes, and deſpiſed them? After theſe Scourges, you are to expect nothing but Deſtruction, which awaits you.

They are Words of one deſpairing to make any Reformation, which God uſeth by *Ezechiel*, (*Ez.* 16.42.) *For I will make my fury towards thee to reſt, and my Jealouſie ſhall depart from thee, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry.* There is nothing remains, after theſe Eſſays have been fruitleſs, and thereupon God declines to put any thing more of this kind in practice, but an utter Deſtruction of a Perſon or Nation. God lets the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* know as much by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, *Becauſe I have purged thee*, ſaith he, (i. e. laboured to purge thee by leſſer Calamities) *and thou waſt not purged; thou ſhalt not be purged from thy wickeneſs any more, till I have cauſed my fury to reſt upon thee.* i. e. There ſhall be no more Purgatives uſed, but for a puniſhment of thy Wickedneſs I will ſend an utter Deſtruction upon thee. Ezek. 24 13.

Since therefore on the one hand a continual flow of Happineſs is ſo dangerous and formidable an Evil, as that ordinarily if it be not prudently ſtemmed, it carries Men into an Abyſs of Deſtruction; and on the other ſide, there is ſo much kindneſs of Intention on God's part in ſending of Adverſity, it being deſigned by him to purifie and refine us; we cannot do leſs, if we cannot or will not do more, than bear the ſtroke of its Hammer, endure the heat of it's Fire quietly and patiently, ſince breaking and melting us are the Methods the great Refiner uſeth to make us brighter than Gold or Silver, which have been Seven times purified in the Fire.

S. 4. § 6. Afflictions ſent by God. Iſa. 45. 7.

(6.) The Conſideration that Afflictions are directed and ſent by God, (who by vertue of his abſolute Sovereignty can do what pleaſeth him both in Heaven and in Earth, is uncontrollable, whether he Forms Light or Darkneſs, makes Peace or creates Evil; challengeth this illimited Power of bringing a Calamity upon a People or ſingle Perſons as his peculiar. *Shall there be any Evil in a City* (any of this ſort) *and the Lord hath not done it?*

Who

Who in Juſtice may lay Afflictions upon us, doth, becauſe we have deſerved them, and greater than he lays upon any part of Mankind here; and becauſe he hath tranſcendently greater Rewards to beſtow upon us in Recompence; who in his moſt comprehenſive Knowledge ſees what is moſt convenient for us, and in his Infinite Wiſdom will be ſure to diſpenſe what is ſo) may be of greater Force than any of the former Reaſons alledged to perſwade us to bear them with Patience, and to convince us that we ought ſo to do.

Which he may do, (*n.* 1.) Firſt, by vertue of his Supreme Dominion, and that juſtly.

And Firſt, Did we on the account of Loſſes of any kind (of Goods, Honour, Friends, Relations) meditate upon God's Supreme Dominion, (which though it be arbitrary, determined by no Law but that of his own good pleaſure, yet is always juſt and righteous) and that this intitles him to a Propriety in whatever we poſſeſs: So that by vertue of it he doth but take back what at firſt he lent us; to which, if we will joyn that other Conſideration, that in his Wiſdom and Goodneſs he doth perhaps but recall and ſeize back again into his own hands thoſe things which he ſaw we might abuſe to our own

hurt, if we were truſted any longer with them, we ſhould not be ſo ſenſibly afflicted, as we are apt to be, when deprived of them, how much ſoever they were ſet by and valued by us, when we were Poſſeſſors of them: However we ſhould not reflect upon our ſelves as Loſers, and bewail the parting with them as a Damage, but look upon our Caſe as that of Reſtitution, a meer refunding back of what was at firſt but lent us, not given.

Epictet. Enuhyrid. c. 5.

Epictetus adviſeth us to have this Opinion in the matter of Deprivation or Loſs, and when we are parted from any thing we poſſeſs, to call it as we ought properly, a ſurrendring of it.

Is thy Child deceaſed? Say, I return'd him back to Providence. Is thy Land taken from thee? (though it be by the Miniſtry of Violence or Fraud) ſay, I have given it back again, or he hath reſumed it.

Sen. ad Polyb. c. 3.

Seneca endeavours by propounding the ſame Conſideration to comfort the grieved and troubled mind of *Polybius*, upon the Death of his Brother, 'Let that

'that Juſtice ('tis his Council to him) 'which hath hitherto directed thy 'Actions, aſſiſt thee in making thy 'Reflections on this occaſion: Recol-'lect with thy ſelf, that thou hadſt no 'injury done thee in being diſſevered 'from thy Brother; and that it was a 'great Courteſie thou enjoyedſt him 'ſo long as thou didſt. He muſt be 'very unequitable, who will not leave 'his Benefactor to diſpoſe of his Bene-'faction according to his own mind, 'and upon his own terms; very cove-'tous too withal, who reckons not up-'on the gain he made by the Fruition 'of it, but computes merely the loſs 'he ſuſtains by the want of it; and 'over and above ingrateful, in whoſe 'apprehenſion the putting an end to a 'Pleaſure, ſeems a doing of an Injuſtice. 'Providence lent thee thy Brother only, 'gave thee no Propriety in him, but 'reſerving this to himſelf, and follow-'ing the Motions of his own Free-will, 'which is the Law and Rule of his 'Conduct, and that a right one, with-'out regarding whether thy Appetite 'was ſated or not with the uſe thou 'hadſt of him for ſo long a time as 'thou hadſt it, it re-demanded this

Loan

'Loan of thee, when he ſaw good. If any man grutches to repay a Sum of Money lent freely and without any Intereſt, when it is required, is he not deſervedly reputed an unjuſt and odd ſort of Man? And if thou repineſt at this, art not thou alike ſo.

Cic. de Conſol. p. 141. ed. Elzevir.

And *Cicero* before him made uſe of it to buoy up his own mind from being overwhelmed with Grief for the Death of his Daughter, or depreſſed with Fear at the Thoughts of his own.

The great God of Nature hath lent us our Life, as ſome generous Creditors do, gratuitouſly, without aſſigning any ſet Day for the re-payment of it; if he then redemands what was lent upon that condition to be reſtored when he ſhould require it, why is he accuſed or complained of as if he dealt hardly? Why do we not rather give him thanks, which is more ſeemly, that when he could have made an earlier Claim of his own, he deferred to do with reſpect to our Conveniency, than complain, as we do, cauſleſly and injuriouſly, for making any Demand at all?

Job being very well ſatisfy'd in this point, that all the abundance he enjoyed before was meerly a Loan from God's Bounty, and his reduction to Penury by being bereft of all this through Plunder, and Fire, and Winds, was but a reſtoring back the Loan to whom in Juſtice it was owing, the Thought thereof arm'd him with a Reſolution equally full of Bravery, Content and Thankfulneſs. *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the Nume of the Lord.* Job 1. 21.

Did we too in the caſe of Diſeaſes and Pains, either tedious through length, or very troubleſome through their Acuteneſs, or of Deformity, or any other reckon'd Ignominy, conſider that by vertue of his Sovereignty he may inflict them, and yet be no more unjuſt in doing this, than we are able to reſiſt his Power when he doth ſo; as a Potter may deal with the Veſſels his hands faſhioned as he pleaſeth, daſh them in pieces, or apply them to the moſt ignoble uſes he thinks fit, we ſhould not in any of theſe Conditions vex and fret our ſelves, but with quietneſs and evenneſs ſubmit to his Pleaſure

Salviac. de Gubernat. l. 4. p. 67. ed. Baluz.

ſure concerning us. Any murmuring againſt God when we are ſmitten by him, whoſe Dominion over us is natural, is but a manifeſtation of our Iniquity and Injuſtice, who take the liberty, and think we may lawfully do ſo, of ſtriking our Servants, over whom our Dominion is but acquired, and may be precarious, becauſe their Subjection to us may be but purely voluntary; and that oft-times out of Capricio and Humour, not for any Fault committed by them, but meerly to ſhew our Power; and many times when their Faults have occaſioned this Treatment, immoderately, and beyond what the Nature and Quality of them merited; whereas he never acts imperiouſly and arbitrarily, never lays any Chaſtiſement upon us, but its with relation either to ſome perpetrated Crime, and in ſome proportion to it; or if it be not formally as a Puniſhment, yet it's with ſome kind and gracious Intention, with ſome wiſe Deſign of reforming and bettering us by it.

S. 4. § 6. n. 2. Which he doth do in Wiſdom.

Bear then the Afflictions we ought in the Second place, which God ſends, becauſe his Wiſdom knows them to be convenient for us. Its he ſends them, to

to whom Man is better known, and more dear too than he is to himſelf; the Reflection on which made the *Roman Satyriſt* adviſe Mankind not to trouble the Deity with Petitions of their own framing; as for inſtance, in asking Wives or Children, becauſe they might be Thorns in their Sides while they lived, or elſe would certainly pierce them through with Sorrow when they ſhould die; but to permit that all-wiſe Being to judge what was fitteſt for Perſons in their ſeveral Conditions and Circumſtances, and accordingly to make a ſuitable Deſignation for them; becauſe he would be ſure to give them what was fitteſt, though it was not the moſt pleaſing to their Imagination, or the moſt agreeable to their vitiated Appetite. *Juvin. Sat.* 10.

So before him *Socrates*, adjudged by the Heathen Oracles, and reputed by that Age in which he lived the wiſeſt of his time, on this conſideration committed himſelf and his Affairs to the Divine Providence, contenting himſelf with asking God's Bleſſing in general, without deſcending to mention any particular kind.

And

And he counſelled his young *Alcibiades* to regulate his Prayers according to this Practice of his; to make his Supplications for good things in groſs, without any diſtinct inſtancing in the particular kinds he would have. His Reaſon for this touch'd not only his Scholar, but reach'd all Mankind; and ſhews that they are therefore all concerned to obſerve the Direction: For becauſe of the hideous Darkneſs which benights our Underſterſtandings, we may ask things pernicious to our ſtate, and ſo better have never moved for them, or never had them granted us. For example, We may ask Riches for our ſelves, which have undone ſo many thouſands who have thirſted for them, and laboured after them to cool that furious heat of Covetouſneſs; Honours, which have broke ſo many men's Sleep and Brains in aſpiring after them; Kingdoms, which have brought ſo many lawful Princes as well as uſurping Tyrants to woful Tragical Ends; Wives, who have not more enriched or ennobled more Families with their plentiful Fortunes or high Alliances, than they have ruined and diſgraced with their expenſive Luxury and wick-

ed

ed Practices; whereas he who could eaſily give, would in his Wiſdom chuſe to beſtow that, which if not ſo acceptable, would be always moſt profitable for us.

Plato in that Book where he brings in *Socrates* thus inſtructing his Pupil *Alcibiades*, commends that Form of Devotion in *Homer*, wherein they deſire him whom they took to be the great Sovereign of the World, to give them thoſe things which were good for them, whether they had pray'd for them or not, and to keep off all hurtful ones, though they might have ask'd them.

And the *Lacedemonian* way of Supplication was of Affinity to this, who whether in their Publick or Private Letanies were never obſerved to Petition their Gods for more, than that they would do thoſe things which were good, and ſuperadd the Grant of thoſe which were of fair eſteem.

The Counſel of *Arian*, how we ſhould deport our ſelves in this Affair, is very Divine, I had well nigh added, Chriſtian, *viz.* That we ſhould addreſs our Prayers to God, who hath the Conduct and Guidance of the Univerſe *Arian. l. 2. c. 8. p. 186. Ed. Cant.*

verſe with the ſame indifferency, as a Traveller applies himſelf to ask the way of thoſe he thinks can direct him, not caring on which hand it lies, much leſs, vainly wiſhing that it might be on this hand, rather than on that; but deſiring only to be ſhew'd the beſt and neareſt Road that leads to the place for which he deſigns; ſo we ſhould ask of him to diſpence what may moſt conduce to our Happineſs without being deſirous, leaſt of all ſollicitous, that it may be this or that, rather than ſome other thing.

And his Rebuke of thoſe who behave themſelves otherwiſe, is no leſs ſharp than his former Direction was excellent; of thoſe who implore God's pity to relieve them, and redreſs their preſent afflicted condition; either changing it, or delivering them out of it. — *Vile Wretches*, ſaith he, *what would you be at? Would you have any thing beſides what's beſt for you? Would you by your own impudent deſires have your Counſellor corrupted, and your Judge perverted to do you harm?*

Iambl. vit. Pythag. This was the meaning of that Advice of *Pythagoras*, (for *Iamblichus* reports it was his) or *Democritus* (for *Sen. Ep. 90.* *Seneca*

Seneca aſcribes it to him) to follow the Deity, *i. e.* To have no impatient Deſires of our own, but quietly to reſign and commit our ſelves to his Conduct through the whole courſe of our Life. *Cleanthes* it ſhould ſeem by his Prayer, was thus ready to follow his Guidance, which was this: Lead me, O God, whetherſoever thy Providence hath appointed, and I'll chearfully follow. So *Arian* kept his Will in Subordination to the Divine, if he ſpeaks of himſelf, and doth not under his own Perſon inſtruct us how we ſhould ſubmit ours to us. 'I have ranked, ſaid 'he, my Will under God's. If it be his 'Pleaſure that I ſhould be parched up 'with a burning Fever, its my deſire 'likewiſe ſo to be. Would he have me 'affect this or enjoy that? I will do ſo. 'Would he not have me? Neither will 'I. Would he have me die? I am con-'tent, and will prepare my ſelf for it. *Seneca* profeſſed as much for himſelf: I do not only obey God's Diſpoſal of me, ſaid he, but approve of it. I follow him not out of Neceſſity, but Choice; I comply with the Advice, That what pleaſed God ſhould pleaſe us; and it is the beſt thing we

Ap. Arian. l. 3. c. ult.

Id. ibid.

Ep. 90.

can put in practice to follow him, who orders all things wisely without murmuring.

The Consideration of God's Wisdom which furnishes him with an exact knowledge of the Diseases of our Souls, and the proper Cures for them, should make us perfectly comply with the Methods he takes, or the Course of Physick he prescribes; quietly to submit to,and patiently to undergo the use and application of the Remedies he directs for the restoring them to their Health ; as Persons in Bodily Distempers or Infirmities give themselves up into the hands of a skilful Physician or Chyrurgion, whose Art and Experience makes them much better acquainted with the Nature and Cure of their several Maladies than they themselves, and submit upon the Confidence of this to all their Operations and ways of Practice, to their Corrosives, Incisions and Caustick, as well as to their Demulsions and Infusions, to their bitter, as well as sweet, to their mild as well as sharp Potions.

Upon this account it is that St. *Augustine* directs us, when we ask any Temporal Blessings of God, to qualifie our

Serm. 53. de verb. Dom.

our Requeſts with this Condition, That if they may be profitable to us, he would grant; if prejudicial, he would deny them; becauſe the Phyſician knows much better than the Patients themſelves what is convenient for them.

And St. *Hierome* aſſigns this Reaſon, why God doth not immediately give us thoſe things which we ask according to his Will, becauſe his Wiſdom ſees it is not a proper Seaſon for us to have them, and therefore not for him to beſtow them. As a Phyſician refuſeth his Patient under a Calenture a cooling Julep he calls for, not for that he judgeth it's unſerviceable to allay the ſcorching Heats of his Diſtemper, but becauſe the time he calls for it is not ſo proper for the Adminiſtration of it. He delays granting them, becauſe he knows this delay will inflame our Deſires, and render our Prayers more fervent. And he alſo gives this as a Reaſon, why tho' *Daniel*'s Prayers were heard, from the Angels being ſent to tell him ſo, yet the accompliſhment was delayed, that he might continue in that holy Duty. He keeps us the longer at Bay, to try our Patience, our Hope, our *Pref. in Abac.*

Faith, and to purge out all the terrene matter which may adhere to them; as Metals are kept the longer in the Fire, that they may be the better refined when they come out of it. He knows Afflictions are instructive and reforming, while Prosperity is apt to corrupt the best Constitution of Mind, and therefore sends them. The Psalmist found them so, and upon this account makes these Acknowledgments, *It is*

Psal. 119. 71, 75. *good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statute. Thou of very faithfulness hast caused me to be corrected.*

The Divine Wisdom knows, that if we always sailed with a full prosperous Gale of Wind, and had Tide and Stream to our Wishes, we should not be sensible enough of our Happiness, or sensible only to undervalue it; that if he fed us all along with Manna or Quails we should surfeit of the Delicious Food and nauseate it: And therefore he orders matters with such a Variety, as that we should sometimes labour and row against a stiff Wind and a strong Tide; we should be sometimes dieted with coarse Food, both for the Correction of those peccant Humours pam-

pering

pering is apt to breed, and to give us the truer reliſh for Dainties when he ſhall afford them us again; which as uſually in goodneſs he doth when he hath prepared our Palats for the right taſte of them; as out of the ſame Principle he turns the Tide and Wind, that we ſhould not be tired out, and quite deſpirited by too hard Labour and Toyl.

And he magnifies it in us who are ſo diſciplin'd as a Happineſs, *Bleſſed is the man whom thou chaſtneſt, and teacheſt out of thy Law.* Pſal. 94.11

But, (3.) As God directed by his Infinite Wiſdom knows what's beſt and moſt convenient, ſo prompted by his Immenſe Goodneſs, he will diſpenſe nothing to us but what is ſo, and therefore we ought to reſt ſatisfy'd, that when Afflictions are the Portion he diſpenſeth to us, he hath a kind Deſign in this, though we, through the Miſt we are in here, either of Prejudice againſt any thing that is troubleſome to the Fleſh, or of Ignorance of the excellent ends of doing ſo, (whether it be for the extirpation of what is noxious in us, or for the Approbation, Illuſtration and Conſummation of our Vertues; or in *S.* 4. § 6. *n.*3. Which he doth likewiſe in goodneſs.

order to prepare us for nobler Rewards and higher Degrees of Glory hereafter) cannot discover the true Intention of his Love. The very Captivity of those who under *Jeojakim*'s Reign were carried away into *Babylon*, was for
Jer. 24. 5. their good, as God acquaints *Jeremiah*: For *Jerusalem* was to be re-built, and re-peopled by their Descendents, whereas those who remained were reserved for greater Calamities under *Zedekiah*.

Having therefore a firm Belief, as we ought to have, that God is essentially and immutably good in himself; and that thereupon this overflowing Fountain of Goodness is beneficially good to all besides and without himself; we can do no other than conclude, that whatever such an one doth, who is thus Entitatively and Communicatively good, must of necessity be really good too; and that it's our Mistake and Error when we think or call it ill.

Thus perswaded, we ought to interpret all kindly, and receive all affectionately, which through the Divine Providence befalls us, though it
S. Hieron. Ep. ad Paulam. seem very harsh to Sence. This is the excellent Direction which St. *Hierome*, com-

comforting the Lady *Paula* upon the Death of her Daughter *Blæſilla*, gives her, and which he vows he was ready to embrace and follow himſelf. 'If I 'am a Husband, and bereft of my lov-'ing Conſort, I become a Widower; 'if a Wife, and by the Death of my 'deareſt Husband I am brought to the 'deſolate Eſtate of a Widow; I will 'bewail my Condition, but however 'bear it, becauſe the Calamity is of 'God's appointment: If I am a tender 'Parent, and my only Child is ſnatch'd 'from me in the Bud of fair Hopes, as 'hard as this my Portion is, I will ſup-'port it, becauſe he who gave him 'took him away; his hand cropt the 'Flower who cauſed it to ſhoot. If I 'am ſtruck with Blindneſs, I'll procure 'a Friend to read to me, and ſo relieve 'my Melancholy; if through Age or 'Accident I become deaf, I will enter-'tain my ſelf under the Affliction with 'the Thought that I ſhall not be peſter-'ed with idle and vain, or what is 'worſe, with Filthy Communication; 'and that I ſhall have the more leiſure 'for Meditation, Contemplation of the 'Divine Perfections, and converſing 'with my God. Shall Poverty, Hunger,

'Cold, Nakedneſs, Diſeaſes come upon me? I will wait till my appointed 'Change ſhall come, and in the mean 'time look upon that as a ſhort, or no 'Inconvenience which ſhall determine 'and conclude in ſo happy an end as 'Death.

Chald. Paraphraſ. in 30. Pſal. 104.

His Juſtice in the moſt proper Act of it, puniſhing, cannot be divided from his Mercy. When he ſent the Flood as he ſat upon the Seat of Judgment to take Vengeance of the Wicked, ſo he ſat upon the Seat of Mercy to deliver *Noah* and his Family.

The weighing of God's Omnipotence, Wiſdom, Goodneſs, ſingly and apart by themſelves, would each of them ſupply us with a convincing Reaſon, that we ought quietly to ſubmit to the Rod of God when he lays it upon our backs, and patiently receive the Correction he inflicts; much more efficacious then muſt the putting of all theſe Arguments into the Scale together be to ſatisfie us of the reaſonableneſs of doing ſo: For what other Remedy, I will not ſay, what better can we deviſe to oppoſe againſt Calamities ſent by Omnipotence, than patiently to bear them; as we do the Rigours of Winter Froſts, or the

the extreme Heats of the Summer, or any other Inclemency of the Seaſon or Weather?

Or what can we do wiſer, than to acquieſce in the Choice which Infinite Wiſdom hath made for us, and take the Lot it hath aſſigned us? Or what can we do more reaſonably, than contentedly to abide in the Station where boundleſs Goodneſs hath placed us? Without queſtion we can do nothing better, wiſer, reaſonablener, than thus to deport our ſelves: For Omnipotence is not to be controlled, much leſs can our Weakneſs make any Reſiſtance to it. Infinite Wiſdom cannot be miſtaken in its Ends or Meaſures, nor can infinite Goodneſs do an unkind Act. His All-ſufficiency makes him the full Poſſeſſor of all good things. His Almightineſs able to beſtow them; and his Perfection, which knows no Bounds, willing to impart and communicate them.

And then, why ſhould we abſolutely imagine that he who hath them to give, and hath likewiſe Power and Ability, Will and Inclinations to do ſo, ſhould not beſtow them on us? Could a Heathen Philoſopher upon his Principles and Belief argue thus; our Opinion

nion then muſt be falſe, if we conceive otherwiſe, and our Practice which follows ſo blind a Guide muſt needs be extremely wrong.

But if we have right Thoughts of God in this point, and yet in the mean while that we believe he diſpenſeth what is beſt for us, we under that very Diſpenſation behave our ſelves frowardly, we muſt be at an odd Strife with our ſelves, our Actions contradicting our Judgment, which ſhould direct and govern them; and our Judgment condemning our Actions, whoſe Approbation they ſhould have.

S. 4. § 7. Arg. 7. Patience neceſſary to Perſeverance, and ſo to Salvation, becauſe no Perſeverance without it.

(7.) As Afflictions, which are the proper Objects for the Exerciſe of Patience, are made the neceſſary Condition of a Chriſtian Life. (He that will live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhall ſuffer Perſecution; hewn and ſaw'd as Stones are for the material Temple, before we can be fit Spiritual Temples for God to dwell in) and neceſſary as the means to Salvation, (made the Road which leads to it; *Through much Tribulation we muſt enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* We muſt paſs through the Vale of Tears, before we come to thoſe Regions of Joy; through the Vale of

Acts 14. 22

the

the Shadow of Death, before we can arrive at Immortality there; muſt be trod or threaſh'd as Corn was wont to before it was laid up in the Granary, before we are fit to be gathered into the Lords Floor; Sacrificed firſt, at leaſt to Publick Scorn and Hatred, if not offered upon the Service of our Faith, before we can be qualifyed as Prieſts to miniſter before God in the Heavenly Temples; ſuffer with our Maſter here, before we reign as Kings with him; carry his Croſs as the Standard of his Warfare; before we can in Triumph bear Palms in our hands. And there is no queſtion to be made, but ſome of the Twenty Four Elders whom St. *John* in one Viſion ſaw ſtanding about the Throne of God, were ſuch who in another Viſion were repreſented to him to have had their Blood ſhed for the Word of God and the Teſtimony they held, to have been ſlain for the Word of Jeſus) ſo the efficacy of them to reach that end for which they are deſigned, and are neceſſarily ſubſervient, depends ſolely on ſupporting them with Patience and Conſtancy. This Virtue is the Hinge, upon the Practice or Omiſſion of which

Tim. 2. 2, 12.

Rev. 4. 10. 6. 9. 20. 4.

which turns our whole Future Estate of eternal Happiness or Misery: For the first is suspended upon our Perseverance in doing well and suffering ill, and our Perseverance in either or both these Estates is maintained by Patience.

The Apostle declares our continuing firmly settled in the Faith we have been planted into, and immovable from the Anchor of that Christian Hope we have once cast, to be the Dispositions which capacitate us for receiving the Benefits made by the Blood of Christ; the Qualifications which fit us to be restored to the good Graces of of his Father, and made whole in the Court of Heaven. *You*, saith he, writing to the *Colossians*, *who were sometimes alienated, and Enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his Flesh thro' death to present you holy, and unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight.* But all this is upon Terms, *viz. If you continue in the Faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel which you have heard.*

Col. 1. 21, 22, 23.

In

In the ſame Apoſtles Judgment it muſt be Indefatigableneſs, which muſt bring us in, and give us the enjoyment of that Harveſt of Glory we look for; *We ſhall reap*, ſaith he, *in due ſeaſon, if we faint not*; reap the Fruits, the delicious Fruits of all our Labour and Toyls; gather in all that rich encreaſe and ſtore which our Hopes in the fair Blome or tender Blade preſaged us, if ſo be we will but wait till the Seaſon of Reaping, Harveſt, or that of gathering ripe Fruits, Autumn, *i. e.* till the laſt Day of the World, if we ſhall ſurvive to that time, when we ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-ſeat of Chriſt to receive in our Bodies according to what we have done in them; and the Wheat ſhall be gathered into the Garner, and the Tares ſhall be gathered by the Angels whom God ſhall employ as Reapers, and caſt into the Fire; the Chaff and Refuſe ſhall be burnt up with unquenchable Fire; or till the laſt moment of our Lives, when we like ripe Corn, ſhall be cut down by the Fatal Sickle, and our Bodies ſhall be gathered to thoſe of our Fathers in the Grave, as that is carried into the Barn; at what time our Souls which cannot

Gal. 6. 9.

Mat. 13. 39, 40.

Mat. 3. 12.

cannot be touch'd by Death, ſhall have a particular Award or Doom by themſelves.

They only who defend themſelves, and keep their Integrity to the laſt, againſt all the rude Shocks of Temptations without capitulating with them, or ſurrendring themſelves up to them; ſhall be made partakers of that Bliſs, of whoſe Incorruptibleneſs, Life; and of whoſe great Dignity, a Crown is made the Emblem by God's Spirit.

Jam. 1.12. *Bleſſed is the man*, ſaith that Spirit by the mouth of St. *James*, *who endureth Temptation; for when he is tryed, he ſhall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promiſed to them that love him.*

They only who ſhall preſerve their Loyalty untainted to the extreme Gaſp, againſt all the Blandiſhments and Allurements ſpread in the way to corrupt it (which is probably a nobler ſort of Defiance, and a difficulter piece of Reſiſtance than the former) ſhall be crown'd. St. *John* was commanded to give this conditional Aſſurance or Encouragement to the Angel of the

Rev. 2. 9. Church of *Smyrna*. *Be thou faithful unto*

unto the end, and I will give thee a Crown of Life.

On the other hand, we find the endleſs Miſery which is preſſed by God's inſupportable Diſpleaſure, by the aggravation of his Anger, by that being doubled and redoubled till it be kindled into a fearful Fiery Indignation, is definitively denounced, ſhall be the inevitable Portion of them who retire on their way to another World, or in their Journey thither relapſe into their former abandoned vitious courſes, or retreat in the Warfare they have engaged in, or revolt to the ſide of thoſe Enemies they have once forſaken and renounced. *The juſt ſhall live by Faith; but if he draw back, my Soul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.* Heb. 10. 38

For if we ſin after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more Sacrifice for Sins; but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment and fiery Indignation which ſhall devour the Adverſaries. Heb. 10. 26, 27.

But now that Perſeverance which is required as a Condition on our parts, that we may be admitted unto, and inſtated in the forementioned happineſs, or ſecured againſt this Miſery, depends upon

upon our Patience in our active or ſuffering Eſtate; for our Hope would quickly flag or ſink, if it were not cheriſh'd or ſuſtain'd by this Vertue, and we ſhould grow faint and weary, not meerly with labour and hardſhip, but with length of Expectation, if this did not keep us in Breath and Vigour; our Loyalty and Fidelity be ſoon ſhaken, if not ſupported by it; and diſheartned through the roughneſs and dangerouſneſs of the way of Piety, we ſhould be ready to turn back, or out of it, if this did not keep up our Spirits, and maintain in us a firm reſolution of proceeding on in our Journey, notwithſtanding all the Diſcouragements of the Road; ſoon be caught and entangled in the pollutions of the World, did not this fortifie us with a true Gallantry of oppoſing all Temptations, whether charming or terrifying ones, to hold out againſt all their Sollicitations, and endure all the Hardſhips they may create us, rather than hearken to and comply with them. It is upon this ground therefore that this ſingle Virtue, as being the ſupport and conſummation of all others, is made the compleat Character of an upright Man now,

how, and ſuch an one who ſhall have the recompence of his Integrity in Bleſſedneſs hereafter. He is ſuch an one, who having heard the Word, keeps it, and brings forth with Patience. That the Promiſe of Happineſs is made to this Virtue in particular, the Reward annext to it, or to it in conjunction with Perſeverance: *He will render to thoſe who by patient continuance in well doing ſeek and look for Honour, and Glory, and Immortality, eternal Life.* Rom. 7, 8, 9.

He who endureth, (or patiently ſuffers, or is patient) *to the end* [for from that Verb, whoſe Participle we have there rendred, *who endureth*, is derived from that Noun which we have elſewhere tranſlated *Patience*] *ſhall be ſaved.* And its inſeparable Connection with the Reward is aſſerted: *For ye have need of Patience after ye have done the Will of God, that ye may receive the Promiſe*; the Benefit of it, or the Reward held forth in it. Mark 13. 3 ὁ ὑπομείνας. Luk. 19. 21 ὑπομονή. Heb. 10. 36 12. 1.

Or its being abſolutely requiſite towards the ſucceſsful finiſhing of the Courſe we are appointed here to run, towards the gaining the Prize which hangs at the Goal. Wherefore .... *Let*

us run with patience the race that is ſet before us.

And again, that Apoſtaſie which ſhall be puniſhed with the inſupportable Effects of the Divine Wrath is the immediate and neceſſary Conſequent of Impatience, which makes Men affect Change and Variety, whatever be the Inconvenience or Miſchief enſuing upon it; or grow weary of conteſting with the Difficulties of the Journey, or reſtleſs under the Pains they endure, and incites them to ſeek a preſent Relief, though the courſe they take be never ſo dangerous; and at the long run it infinitely increaſeth their Torments. If ſuch then be the intimate Conjunction between this Virtue of Patience and that of Perſeverance; if they are ſo cloſely and indiviſibly combined, that the laſt is not to be found without the firſt; and the Recompence of our Warfare, our Race of all the Labour we take, of all the Pain we undergo, lies at the foot of Perſeverance; or what's the ſame, of our patient continuance, and that alone can take it up: There is nothing can more plainly or more ſtrongly evince the neceſſity of arming our ſelves wit

with Patience than this; unleſs we reckon there is no neceſſity of being happy hereafter; or we can, after ſuch a Remonſtrance of the Caſe, and it's State, chooſe to be miſerable.

And now, if any of theſe Arguments fetch'd from Reaſon and Religion, or all of them together, have convinced us, that it is our Wiſdom as well as Duty under all Events, to poſſeſs our Souls in Patience, to be the abſolute Maſters of all their Motions, then like Men convinced we ſhould yield, and no longer perverſely diſpute, *i. e.* Not act contrarily to that we are ſatisfied is our Obligation: But our Practice ſhould be conformable to our Judgment in the Point; and our Deportment on all occaſions requiring the ſpecial Exerciſe of this Vertue of Patience ſhould be anſwerable to the Perſwaſion we have of it's Importance.

For Piety and Philoſophy which are genuine, are uſeful alſo, and conſiſt not in believing or knowing what is right and fit, but in doing accordingly.

S. 5 3*d*. General Examples to induce us to the practice of Patience by the force of imitation.

Now forasmuch as after Conviction by Arguments of our Obligation, to practise this Virtue, and that its a part of Prudence to do so; Examples may be of singular use to excite us to set about it. [For Examples, according to their difference of being good or bad, are powerful Inducements to engage us either to embrace Virtue, or follow after Vice. And as they are set by Persons of a more illustrious Eminence than others, so they are of more force to encline us the one way or the other.] I shall therefore for my own and others Advantage and Proficiency in this Virtue propound some of this kind for our Imitation; that looking on them we may be both inflamed with an Emulation to follow them, and facilitated to exercise that Grace which appears so amiable while we contemplate it in them.

§ 1. That of God, produced to stir us up to the exercise of that Vertue which is an imitation of him.

The first I shall offer for this purpose shall be incomparably the greatest, that of God himself: For though the infinite Excellency of his Nature makes him proportionably, *i*, *e*. infinitely happy; and its the Priviledge of Infinite Happiness to be secure against all Disasters, which are the ordinary

dinary Lot and Portion of Humane Life, becauſe Men are weak-ſighted, and cannot foreſee them far enough off to decline them; or are weak-built, and cannot ſhelter themſelves againſt them; as alſo the Subject in which the Exerciſe of Patience is moſt requiſite, and ſhe appears moſt illuſtrious) yet is he pleaſed to ſhew himſelf a Pattern of Patience in another way to Mankind, and to fill up that glorious Name, which among other Titles he proclaimed of himſelf of being gracious and long-ſuffering, bearing with them while they go on in Wickedneſs, and thereby provoke his Wrath; the only thing that is offenſive to his Nature, and oppoſite to his declared Will; though armed with Power, he is every Moment able to execute his Anger, and once for all take Vengeance on them. *For God is a righteous Judge, ſtrong and patient, and God is provoked every day.* Patient, though ſtrong, and Patient, even while continually provoked; or reading that place as the lateſt Tranſlation of our Bibles hath rendred it; *God judgeth the righteous; God is angry with the wicked every day, yet ſtill he is patient and*

Exo. 34. 6.

Pſal. 7. 12

Rom. 2. 4. 4. 13.

long-suffering; though he is sensible of their Offences as soon as done, yet he adjourns their Punishment to a further day of Wrath: For it follows, *If he turn not, he will whet his Sword*, i. e. He shall sharpen his severe Wrath for a Sword, as it is elegantly both expressed and explained by the Author of *Wisdom*. And albeit after the forecited Text it be immediately subjoyned, *He hath bent his Bow, he hath made it ready*, as if he had already done it; yet that only denotes he is in a prepared Posture ever to do himself right on the Wicked; he hath prepared for him the Instruments of Death, however he suspends or delays the actual Infliction of Punishment; or its a piece of Prophetick Language usual in Scripture, denoting by the past time the certainty of what he will do in the future.

Wisd. 5. 13.

4. 14.

Such a Pattern of long-suffering hath God shew'd himself to Sinners, that many have taken the occasion thence to perswade themselves and others, there was no such being as a Deity, because they saw no marks of his Displeasure sent on those who provoked and deserved to feel it most: Nay, those very Wretches themselves who

who are of this number, have drawn a Motive from their own Impunity; becauſe his Mercy ſpares them, and his tenderneſs with-holds his hand from ſtriking, but encourage themſelves to proceed in their wicked Courſes; *Becauſe Sentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily, therefore the hearts of the ſons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil*, and to conclude againſt the belief of his Exiſtence. Eccl. 8.11.

And indeed, if the Concluſion could have been rightly inferr'd from their eſcaping his Anger, the Confidence they took to ſin was very agreeable to it.

Such an one was *Selius* in the Poet, who affirmed Heaven was an empty ſpace, uninhabited by any Divine Being, and proved it by himſelf, who flouriſh'd while he maintained this Tenet againſt it. So the *Syracuſan Tyrant Dionyſius* made uſe of his proſperous Voyage in ſailing back from *Locri*, after he had robb'd the Temple of *Proſerpine* there, to *Syracuſe*, for the deriding and expoſing the Opinion, that there were any Gods. And the Cynick *Diogenes* pronounced boldly, That the long and fortunate Life of *Martial. l.* 4 *Epig.*21 *Cic. de Nat. Deor. l.*3.

Harpalus, who was a Pyrate in those days, was a standing Evidence against them and their being.

But he hath not thought it enough to set himself for a Pattern of long-suffering under all the Insults and Affronts done to his Majesty, Power, Justice and Holiness by ungodly Men; but he hath likewise set himself an Example of Goodness and Benificence to the insolent and injurious; so he manifests himself to be, in causing the Sun, Moon and Stars to dispence their Light and Heat, and to shed abroad all their kind, benign Influences for their Use and Service as well as of others, while he exactly divides and apportionates his healthful, fruitful Seasons to both alike; while with the same equal Favour he watereth the Hills from his
Psal. 65.13 Chambers; sendeth the Springs to run among them, and these augmented into Rivers, to enrich as well as beautifie with their long course the subjacent Plains; commands the Clouds to drop Fatness on both, spreads the Pastures over with Flocks, covers the Valleys so thick with Corn or Grass, as that
Psal. 63.13 they shout for joy, and laugh and sing; causeth the Trees bearing Fruit to hang down

down their Heads loaded and ſurcharged with abundance, for the Profit and Pleaſure of both. In ſhort, he makes the whole Courſe and Frame of Nature to ſerve and pay Tribute to each with a like reſpect. Thus he is not only long-ſuffering, but abundant in goodneſs; not only ſlow to Anger, but of great kindneſs. Exo. 34.6. Joh.2. 17.

And now if God patiently endures the daily, the hourly, the conſtant Indignities of all us Offenders; yea, even of the haughtieſt Sinners, ſuch who proudly call in queſtion his Being, or peremptorily deny or ſaucily flout at it; while he could do himſelf Juſtice every moment in our Deſtruction, chooſing rather to expect, as well as deſigning that this forbearance ſhould lead us to Repentance, than utterly to ſlay us; if, over and above this, he is ſeveral ways kind and indulgent to us and them, we have the ſtrongeſt Inducements that Example can afford, or indeed the ſtricteſt Obligations that Juſtice can lay upon us, ſo to behave our ſelves towards him as he deals with us; and as he patiently bears with our Sins, while he might immediately ſend abroad his Judgments, and ſtrike us dead in the Rom.2. 4.

the Commission of them; so likewise we should patiently bear the Chastisements he lays upon us by way of just Punishment for them, but intermixt with kind intentions of amending and reforming us by them; since besides, if we should be froward, its still he alone who laid the Rod on our backs, who can take it off; he only who imposed the Burthen, who can remove it.

S. 5. § 2. The Example of Christ.

The next Example which I shall produce, shall be that of his beloved Son and our dear Lord and Master *Jesus Christ*, who nine Months waited with Patience the forming of a Body in the Virgins Womb; which he was to put on, that he might be in a capacity by the assumption of our Nature to make satisfaction in it for us, and perform the whole Work of our Redemption, who after his coming thence into the World cloathed with that, waited several Revolutions of the Sun, and thirteen
Luk. 20. 54 times as many Courses of the Moon, till it gradually encreased, and he grew up in it to a just Stature and Age; and after he was so grown, he was content to lie obscure in his reputed Fathers House, unregarded, working, as 'tis thought,

thought, at his mean Trade, before he entred upon that Employment, for the Execution of which he was commiſſioned by his Heavenly Father to go upon Earth: And then, when by maturity of Age, being about Thirty Years old, he was fit for the Diſcharge of it, he was content to be admitted to his Office by the Miniſtry of a Servant, to receive the Ceremony of Initiation, Baptiſm, from his hands; who ought rather to have been inſtated into his place of a Harbinger by our Saviour; conſcious of which unaptneſs at firſt he modeſtly refuſed to perform it— *John forbad him---ſaying, I have need to be baptized of thee; and comeſt thou to me?* Till the Maſters Humility, which would receive no Denial, overcame the Servants, and made him obedient to take the Honour which was deſigned him. ---*Jeſus anſwering, ſaid unto him, Suffer it to be ſo now*— *Then he ſuffered him.* Mat. 3. 14. 4. 15.

When after this Rite of Conſecration he was to be further prepared for the actual Execution of his Charge by entring the Liſts with the Devil; He manag'd the Combat with Words only, and he who could have repelled the bold

bold Aſſailant with his Power, was content to foil him with reaſoning out of Scripture.

This being over, when he appeared in Publick, diſcharging his Function, and doing the Work he came to do, *ſcil.* his Fathers Will; he ſubmitted to circumſtances, which made his Condition not higer than that of a Servant.

Mat. 20. 17, 18. Phil. 2. 7. In this ſence he was *under the form of a Servant, and as one that miniſtred.* And during the whole time of his Negotiation, whether three or four, or more years, he deported himſelf with much Sweetneſs and Patience.

When his Diſciples in a Storm betrayed their great Fears, and their little Faith, and unſeaſonably awaked him out of Sleep to repreſent their imminent Danger as they thought, and tax his Supine Security as it were, and neMat. 8, 26. glect of them. *Maſter, careſt thou not that we periſh?* Diſturb'd thus, he only gently rebukes their Timerouſ-
Luke 8. 25. Mark 4. 38, 39. neſs and Infidelity — *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little Faith?* Or, *where is your Faith?* Inſtead of ſeverely chiding them for the ſame Fault, their being ſurprized by a needleſs Fear at his

his appearance to them, or caſt down by it, and ſunk lower in their Courage than the loweſt Depth of thoſe Waters on which he walked, miſtaking him for a Spirit, he raiſeth them out of that Conſternation by ſpeaking comfortably to them, *Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid.* Mat. 24.27 He rebuked with all Meekneſs the Drowſineſs of his three Diſciples, who were his greateſt Intimates, and which ſeems thereupon to have had a mixture of Unkindneſs as well as Humane Weakneſs, eſpecially after he had intreated them to watch with him, and that but for an hour, and at a time too when he was environed from without by the moſt apparent formidable Dangers, and he was ſeized within by the ſtrongeſt Agonies and Convulſions of Sorrow, *What, could ye not watch one hour?* Matth. 26. 37, 38, 39, 40. And inſtead of aggravating this, that they could not deny themſelves a little Slumber for his ſake, who was ready to lay down his Life for theirs: Nay, upon the very inſtant of doing ſo, he finds out a favourable Excuſe for this, which another would have taxed for odious Ingratitude, *The Spirit indeed is willing, but the Fleſh is weak.* 44. And thus

thus he gently reproved St. *Peter*, whoſe Fears aroſe as the Wind did; and that which made him venture on the Waters at firſt, ſinking, began to ſink his Perſon, *O thou of little Faith, why doſt thou doubt?*

When the *Phariſees*, his cauſleſs and malicious Enemies, ſecretly accuſed him in their Hearts of Blaſphemy, for having ſaid unto the ſick of the Palſie, *Thy Sins be forgiven thee*; as they were cut to the Heart with Envy, to ſee him reſtore that Paralytick to firm Strength, he only mildly reproved them for their uncharitable Impeachment and wicked calumniating him.

Mat. 9. 2, 3. *Wherefore do you think evil in your hearts?*

And if he ſeems to depart from this Sweetneſs elſewhere, and to ſharpen his Reproofs againſt them with cutting language,

Mat. 23. *Ye fools, and blind; ye blind guides.*

He uſeth this Acrimony out of very Tenderneſs and Campaſſion; it was to rouſe them out of that ſenceleſs Stupidity which their wilful Prejudices againſt him had cauſed, notwithſtanding the many Signs and Wonders he had wrought before them to convince them of

of the Authority of his Miſſion, and the Truth of his Doctrine.

All the time that he executed his Prophetick Office among his own People the *Jews* to whom he was ſent, he endured with much Long ſuffering the Contradiction of Sinners againſt himſelf, (*for his own received him not*) and attended the Correction of their crooked and perverſe Nature, the Reformation of their corrupted Manners. Heb. 12. 3. Joh. 1. 11.

This good Shepherd ſent to ſeek after the loſt Sheep of the Houſe of *Iſrael*, who had gone aſtray from his Fathers Folds, and the wholſom and pleaſant Paſtures of his Providing, into a barren Feeding, a very Wilderneſs of Thorns and Briars, who had, ſwerving from his moſt excellent Rules and Divine Inſtructions, turn'd aſide to the obſervation of vain and humane Inventions, followed the Imaginations of their own darkned and miſguided Hearts, made and continued this Inqueſt to recover them with unwearied Patience.

And when he found them, he did not only lead them back, as a tender Shepherd doth his Sheep which are with young, but gather'd them with Iſa. 40. Luke 13.

his

his Arms, laid them upon his Shoulders, carried them in his own Boſom, as he doth his new yean'd Lambs, and cheriſh'd them there.

He patiently ſuſtained to eat and converſe with his and his Fathers Enemies, Sinners, particularly with that Perſon whom he knew to be diſpoſed by his Covetouſneſs to betray him; and when opportunity ſhould ſerve for the gratifying that Luſt, would certainly do ſo; entruſted this capital Enemy, though aware of his Perfidiouſneſs, not only with the Bag which held his ſmall Treaſure, but with diſpencing the great Myſteries of the Goſpel; advanced him to the higheſt Dignity in his Kingdom, the Church, that of Apoſtleſhip; and at laſt, refuſed him not his Lips, though his Kiſs was treacherous, and the Signal agreed on for the executing the curſed Conſpiracy he had entred into with the Prieſts to deliver him into their hands, took his perfidious arreſting him with a Gentleneſs near to Kindneſs it ſelf, as his demanding of him the occaſion and end of his coming with an arm'd Force, and the Compellation with which he uſher'd it in, ----*Friend, wherefore art*

Mat. 26. 50. & 55.

art thou come? ſufficiently declare. And if before he was apprehended he prayed thrice with all earneſtneſs in the Garden, that that *Cup might paſs from him*; though I cannot ſay with *Origen* in one place, that it was, that he might have a more bitter Cup, that he might ſuffer a more cruel Death; yet it was not out of Cowardiſe, and a deſire to decline Death, but proceeded from tenderneſs: (As the ſame *Origen* elſewhere) That his Death might not aggravate God's Judgments upon the Jewiſh Nation, or upon a View, that while it was propitiatory for Mankind, it was yet the Award of God's Juſtice againſt him as their Surety, undertaking to ſatisfy for their Sins.

Betrayed thus by his Diſciple, and apprehended and led away in Triumph by his inſolent Foes, as a Thief, or ſome ſuch Malefactor, ſeized after a Purſuit, and carried before Juſtice, with Swords and Staves; firſt to *Annas* a Man in no Dignity at that time, except the Relation of being Father-in-law to *Caiaphas* the High Prieſt for that year, then to *Caiaphas*: He, the great Prophet, whom God had promiſed to raiſe up to his People like unto *Moſes*, ſubmit- Joh. 18.19

ted to be examined concerning his Doctrine before the little Scribes and Readers of the Law; yea, he who was Truth it self, and gave the Law to *Moses*, and spake by the Prophets, submitted to be accused before these Depravers and Corrupters of the Writings of both by their false Glosses as an Impostor; patiently heard the vile Charge that was given against him of being a Blasphemer, without so much as opening his Mouth to vindicate his injured Innocency by a Reply. What Patience in Union with Humility was this, to stand mute to such an Impeachment, which he could so easily have avoided, and not to say one Word in his Defence, when he could readily have made such a Justification of himself, as should have dissipated all the black Calumnies of his Adversaries, and quite silenced and confounded them? Here he whom the Father appointed Heir of all things, *i. e.* Constituted Lord, and gave the Dominion of them into his Hands; who was the Wisdom of the same Father, and knew what was in the Hearts of Men, without asking them their Thoughts, suffered himself to be struck by the domineering Servants

vants of the Jewiſh Council, and then mockt by their ſawcy Malapertneſs, *Prophecy who ſmote thee?* while he could not only have told his Abuſers, but have ſmote them with Blindneſs, or with Death, and reſcued himſelf out of their Hands, he ſtood dumb, in his Mouth were no Reproofs of theſe inſolencies: *When he was reviled, he reviled not again*; and like one deſtitute of Power to help himſelf, returned not Violence and Outrage with Force back again. Luke 24. 64, 65.

Carried from the High Prieſts Hall before the *Roman* Preſident, and ſent from him to *Herod*, he bore all the contumelious Deſpight with which the proud uſurping Prince and his rude Guards treated him, in Silence, the higheſt ſign that his Spirit was not provoked or exaſperated by their uſage of him. Luke 23. 7, 9, 11.

Remanded back again by him to *Pilate*, he ſuffered the inſulting Carriage and upbraiding Language of that haughty Judge, telling him, That in his hands were the Iſſues of his Life or Death; and that he could by his Decretory Sentence determin the Event either way as he pleaſed, with ſuch a Mode-

ration, as barely to anſwer him, *Thou*
Joh 19 11 *couldſt have no power at all againſt me, except it were given thee from above.*

With the ſame quiet Temper and Peaceableneſs of Mind he received the Sentence of his Condemnation; that Sentence, which beſides its Injuſtice in the pronouncing of it, was aggravated by its being grounded on the Subornation of falſe Witneſſes, and their diſagreement too, and its taking place when a Robber, a Murderer, and a Rebel was pardoned. And ſo he bore all the parts of Scorn and Pain proluſory to the Infliction of it; his being bound, ſcourged, ſpit upon, ſmote, reproachfully derided with the Mock-Emblems of Pageant Kingſhip, a Crown of Thorns, a Reeden Scepter, a counterfeit ſcarlet Robe, no better than ſome Common Soldiers Red Coat of a mean Dye, the falſe and taunting Acclamations of *Long live the King of the Jews.* The ſcoffing of the bended Knee before him; his carrying the burthenſome Croſs ſome part of the way between the Judgment-Hall and *Mount-Calvary*, till probably his Enemies ſeeing him ready to ſink under it, con-
Joh 19. 17 ſtrained *Simon* of *Cyrene* to bear it the reſidue

reſidue of the Stage, even to the fatal one, the place of Execution.

Nail'd to the Croſs, and there hanging a ſad Spectacle worthy of all Commiſeration, and fit to move it and Sorrow beſides in any, whoſe Breaſts were warmed and ſoftned with the leaſt Humanity; the Prieſts nevertheleſs, the Elders, the Scribes, the Soldiers who had the Guard of him, the Multitude who ſtood by to gaze on him, the Thieves who ſuffered with him, at leaſt one of them, *i. e.* Men of all Conditions and Qualities, as if they had put off their Nature, and with it all Tenderneſs, opended their Quivers, their Throats; bent their Tongues, and ſhot their poyſonous Arrows, even ſharp, bitter and reproachful words againſt him; *This Fellow, this Blaſphemer, this Deceiver.* Reviled and taunted him; *Thou that deſtroyeſt the Temple, and buildeſt it in three days, ſave thy ſelf; if thou be the Son of God, come down from the Croſs. He ſaved others, himſelf he cannot ſave. If he be the King of Iſrael, let him come down now from the Croſs, and we will believe him. He truſted in God, let him deliver him if he will have him. Thus* Luk. 23. 39, 40. Mat. 27. 40. & 42.

1 Pet. 2. 23. *reviled, he reviled not again: When he suffered this, he threatned not, but committed himself to him who judgeth righteously.*

And yet he did not barely receive and endure these contumelious Indignities with an undisturbed Evenness; he returned their Insolence and Scorn, and the Malice which provoked them to do them with the greatest Token of Affection, the most fervent Charity of his Prayer, *Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.* Which Act (certainly not to be moved with Injuries, and to recompense them thus) was a greater Miracle than any he wrought.

Amidst the sharp Pains of the Cross which entred into his Soul, as the Iron did into his Body, the Nails into his Flesh, his Mind was as serene and calm as if he had been altogether impassible, and insensible of them. He made no Complaints of the Iniquity and Cruelty of his Enemies, nor of his Fathers Severity in permitting them to use him so.

For his Expostulation with his Father about this was with all Sedateness, Filial Reverence and Submission

to

to his Pleaſure, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Mat. 17. Mark 15.

All that he beſides added amidſt his Sufferings was, *I thirſt*, (which too was mentioned without repining) the commending the Care of his diſconſolate Mother to his beloved Diſciple, and him to her innocent Affections; his comforting the penitent Thief, *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradice*; his declaring the great Work he came into the World to do, (his Fathers Will, which was our Redemption) to be compleated; *It is finiſhed*; his reſigning his Spirit into his Fathers hands, from whom he received it, when he had prepared and faſhioned a Body for him, with all humble Obeyſance, *Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit*; with which form of Surrendry, bowing down his Head, he gave up the Ghoſt. Joh. 19. 20. v. 26, 27. Luk. 23. 46 Joh. 19. 30 Luk. 23. 46 Joh. 19. 31.

Thus he comforted his Diſciples by his Example in bearing his Croſs, and bearing it in this wiſe, to incline them to take it up; and confirmed them in the reſolution of Martyrdom, as well as exhorted them to it.

And as he thus manifested his Patience in enduring in his Life Poverty, and all the Inconveniences and the Hardships with the Contempt, which are the Attendants of that low Condition, and at his Death all Pains, and the more cruel Insults of malicious envenomed Foes; so
Joh. 19. 31 in the days of his Flesh he expressed another sort of Patience; expecting with much long-suffering the Repentance of his People, the *Jews*, being extremely desirous to gather them under the Shadow of his Wings; as a Hen gathereth her Chickens in order to save them from his Fathers Wrath, and their deserved Destruction; and this, even after, and notwithstanding they had killed the Prophets, and ston'd the Messengers that were sent unto them to foretel and prepare them for this Advent of his designed to heal them.

Acts 2. Acts 4. Likewise, after he was taken up from among them who had Crucify'd him the Lord of Life, and murthered him their Prince and Saviour, and received up into Heaven, and exalted by his Father to the Right Hand of his Power and Majesty, he gave a signal Proof of this in waiting Forty Years for their Repentauce and Conversion, before

before he ſent the *Roman* Armies to take Vengeance of them for his own innocent Blood, and that of his Saints poured out like Water round about *Jeruſalem*, and for the reſt of their enormous Impieties. And even now at this time, in this ſtate of Exaltation, while he ſets crown'd with Honour and Glory on the Right Hand of the Throne of his Father; he in mercy ſtill ſtretcheth out his healing Wings over them, earneſtly deſiring they would accept of Covert under them, coming to him by Faith, and looking for Salvation in his Name, and his alone; in mercy he defers and prorogues the time of his returning back to his laſt and eternal Judgment, out of a ſpecial Tenderneſs and Compaſſion to them, as well as a general one to Mankind, willing that none ſhould periſh, but willing that all, even the moſt obſtinate and obdurate, ſhould through the Obedience of Faith, and ſoftned by Repentance, come to everlaſting Life.

But becauſe it may be pleaded in Bar, or pretended in excuſe for not imitating the Example of our great Lord and Maſter, that the Shine of his

his Virtues, even breaking through the dark ſhrowd of his Fleſh, is ſo ſtrong and bright, as they dazle our weak Eyes, and we cannot look upon them with a ſtedfaſtneſs fit for the copying them; that they are too ſublime and excellent to be tranſcribed by Men ſubject to, and encompaſs'd with Frailties and Infirmities; nay, made up of them as much as of Fleſh and Blood; though he dwelt among us to ſet us a Pattern, as much as to inſtruct us, and ſuffered to leave us an Example, as well as to lay down a Price for our Redemption. (And although St. *Peter* thought not his Wife too weak to imitate it in ſome meaſure, when ſeeing her carried to ſuffer Death, he encouraged her to it, by reminding her of his Example.) I ſhall therefore in the third place propound the Example of one who had no Advantage of a Nature ſuperiour to ours to ſupport him under a burthen and weight of Afflictions, almoſt immenſe and inſupportable, and aid him in his Paſſage o'er a dangerous, or direct him in his ſteerage, through a boyſterous Sea of Troubles.

You

You have heard of the Perſon and his Deportment, as St. *James* tells them to whom he immediately ſent his Epiſtle, and you mediately, it being wrote for your, and all ſucceeding Believers Inſtruction, as well as theirs, ---- *Ye have heard of the patience of Job.*

This Perſon is conceived by ſome to have been brought by God himſelf upon the Stage, a Stage of Miſery and Calamities, that his patient Behaviour on it might ſtand an Example for all Poſterity to imitate in any the like occaſion; ſhew'd publickly to the World as the ableſt and skilfulleſt Maſter of Defence in that kind, and with deſign to inſtruct Mankind how, if they ſhould be put upon entring the Liſts with Adverſity, they ſhould combat it; how appointed they ſhould come, and how they ſhould manage this Defenſive Weapon of Patience.

§ 5. § 3. The Example of *Job.*

V. S. *Chryſ. T.* 5. or 27. p. 168. & *T.* 6. or 10. p. 107. *ed. Savil.*

It is *Tertullian*'s Conceit, that God ſet him up, raiſed or erected him to remain an illuſtrious Trophy of Conqueſt over the Devil, whom he repulſed in all the Aſſaults he made on him, foil'd and vanquiſh'd in all his Attempts, tho' he had been ſufficiently batter'd and bruiſed

Tertul. de Pat. c. 14. *p.* 167. *ed. Rigal.*

bruised by the rude Shocks of Afflictions he had sustained, before he set upon him; and like a Trophy hung about with Flags and Pennons, and Banners taken from a discomfited Enemy, he abides to this present time, and so shall continue to all succeeding Ages, a conspicuous and venerable Monument of the Atchievements of Patience, and of the glorious Victory that Saint obtained by it.

Auctor Commentarior in Job laudatus ab Origene apud Salian. Annal. ad A. M. 2398. Lu. Holsten. l. 1. not in Porphyr.

The Book, which contains a Narrative of his Troubles, and his Carriage under them, was, as it is conjectured by most, penn'd by himself with the Truth and Exactness of a faithful Historian, and an upright Man, in the *Arabick* or *Syriack* Language, and afterwards translated into *Hebrew* by *Moses* the great Captain of God's People at what time he led them through the Wilderness, to the intent that they might conserve in their Memories, and revolve in their Thoughts so great a Courage and Patience as that of *Job*'s, who opposed his naked Breast without any covert, except that of these two Virtues, (or rather one single one) against all the Weapons the Devils Skill or Malice could forge for the wounding him

Abenezra Comment. in 1 c. Job. Pocock. Præfat. in Mich.

him with, and making an Impreſſion on him, contrary to his Duty.

Or if it was digeſted into that Method we have it in now under the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, as it is the Surmiſe of a great Man, ſtill the deſign was the ſame that that People of the *Jews* having ſo memorable an Example before them as his, might by the Aſſiſtance of it be ſupported to bear all the Calamities of that Exile and Thraldom which then oppreſſed them.

Rich. Simon. Caſtigat. ad Iſ. Voſſium, p. 52.

What *Moſes* the Servant of God in that Verſion, or any other in the Collection of the Hiſtory and Diſtribution of it into its preſent Order intended principally for the Benefit of that Nation under either of thoſe Circumſtances, is left upon Record for our Inſtruction, and that we might in any caſes of the like Nature accommodate it to our own Uſe, That ſince we cannot live in the World without meeting with Troubles and Croſſes of ſome kind or other, which are apt through our Weakneſs and Unpreparedneſs to create us Diſturbance and Vexation, we ſhould in order to the preventing their working of this Miſchief, oft conſider with our ſelves the Example of *Job*'s Deportment,

ment under greater and more numerous Calamities than have, or ever are in any probability like to befall us.

This Man, after he had received the News of the utter Devastation and Ruine of his Estate, the largest and fairest of any Person in the East; the Destruction of his Family, which if not Royal, and he himself a King, as the Seventy Interpreters (or rather the Supplement to their Interpretation, to be found at the end of *Job*) make him to be, was at least an Illustrious House among the *Edomites*; he being reckon'd by some the third in Descent from *Esau* a Prince; by others the Second; or at least of a very ancient Race, and a great and noble Extraction, if he was the Granchild of *Sem*, or issued from the Loyns of *Nachor*, *Abraham*'s Brother, as others have thought.

Aristus laudatus ab Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. 9. c. 25.

After his being sorely wounded in his own Person, as well as he had been before in his Family and Estate, and having endured the Assaults of Thirty several Diseases, if *Pineda*'s Computation be allowed, which were continued without Intermission; they relieving one another, as Soldiers do their Guards,

Guards, once in Four and Twenty Hours, and making their Onſet by turns, as is the Imagination of *Ariſteas*; and in this manner making their Attacks, and plying their Batteries inceſſantly for Seven Years together, which is the Opinion of St. *Baſil*, St. *Chryſoſtom*, and St. *Cyril* of *Alexandria*. Diſeaſes, whoſe loathſom Smell was ſuch, at leaſt of ſome of them, as to provoke his Friends, that they might get rid of their offenſive Stench to lay him without Doors upon a Dunghil: Diſeaſes, whoſe Ulcers putrifying his Fleſh, turn'd it into a Paſture of Worms while it was on this ſide the Grave, as *Tertullian*, followed herein by his Diſciple St. *Cyprian* and St. *Baſil*, writes, drawing their Conjecture, it's probable, from his own Words, || *My Breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the Graves are ready for me*; i. e. Nothing is wanting to make me dead in all Men's Opinions, but a Grave for my Burial, which yet I cannot obtain, as the Latine and Seventy in their rendring the place, illuſtrate it. After, I ſay, his being thus haraſs'd, ſpent and worn out, he did not not yet behave himſelf unſeemly, nor ſpeak

Pineda & Ariſteas ap eum laudatus ex Euſeb. Præpar. S. Baſil. S. Chryſoſt. & S. Cyril. laudati à Salian. ad A. M. 2398. Idem, Cyrillus memoratus ab Anaſtaſio in quæſtion. in S. Scrip. q. 31. To. 1. Biblioth. Pat. Tertul. de Pat. c. 14. p. 168. ed Rig.

|| *Job.* 17. 1 Hebr. קברים לי

ſpeak unadviſedly with his Lips; nor ſhew any Signs of Diſcompoſure by Words or Actions. He then only broke out into ſomething, having the reſemblance of a Paſſion, when his Wife (the Inſtrument of the Devil employ'd to diſorder him, as he had before with Succeſs uſed *Eve* to overthrow *Adam* in his Innocency) reduced by his Poverty to a want of Bread, and yet [oppreſſed with another Paſſion within, as well as that external Neceſſity] aſhamed to do it, as St. *Baſil*, St. *Chryſoſtom*, and *Olympiodorus* have judged, ſuggeſted to him that wicked Counſel, that reflecting both on his own and her deplorable Condition, he would curſe God who dealt it; and having done ſo, voluntarily put an end to his own Life and Miſery together; or execrating God, he would incenſe him to kill him.

Then indeed his Patience, which had ſtood impregnable againſt all the former Aſſaults, unſhaken againſt all the recited Storms and Tempeſts of Adverſity, which beat upon him, moved him to an Indignation of her Advice, and that inſtigated him to give her a ſharp

ſharp Rebuke for it, *Thou ſpeakeſt as one of the fooliſh Women ſpeak.* Job 2. 10.

Then indeed he ſaid unto her, *Thou ſpeakeſt, looking upon her,* as the *Seventy* make the Addition to the *Hebrew* Text, looking upon her ſternly, and with Eyes full of Wrath, as St. *Baſil*, with a Countenance and Brow bent in Anger, as St. *Chryſoſtom* deſcants upon the Supplement of the *Seventy*'s Tranſlation, which upon ſo juſt an occaſion, ſo commendable a Conteſt as the Vindication of God's Honour and the Equity of his Dealings, is not to be called Anger, but Zeal for his Holineſs; as on the other ſide, tamely to have born his Wife's Advice of declaiming or railing rather upon God, and inveighing againſt the Proceedings of his Providence, had not been ſo much Patience in him as Stupidity. Εμβλέψας εἶπεν αὐτῇ. 70. *Ibid.* *Caten. in Job.*

Thus ſignally eminent was the Patience of *Job* amidſt the ſevereſt Trials of it, and ſo admirable the Example he hath left us of this Vertue.

To this I might add the Examples of other Saints of God, either directly commemorated, or only glanced at in Scripture, *Who had trials of mockings and ſcourges, moreover of Bonds and* Heb. 11. 36, 37, 38.

Imprisonments; were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the Sword; wandred about in Seeep-skins, in Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, wandred in Deserts and in Mountains, or were forced to hide themselves in Dens and Caves of the Earth; such were *Joseph* and *David*, *Zacharias* the Son of *Barachias*, *Elias* and the Prophets under the impious and cruel Reign of *Ahab*; *Isaias*, *Jeremiah*, the Mother and her 7 Sons under the Persecution of the Church by *Antiochus Epiphanes*; and mentioning them I might endeavour to inflame you, shall I say, with an emulation of their Patience in sustaining all their Troubles and Torments, or to render you sedate under all your Sufferings as they were under theirs; and take occasion thence to inculcate St. *James*'s Advice, which is the most natural Inference which can be drawn from them, or to urge and press it home upon you from the force of such illustrious Presidents;

2 Mach. 7.

Jam. 5. 10. *Take, my Brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the Name of the Lord, for an example of Suffering Affliction and Patience.*

But

But foraſmuch as the ſingle Example of this renowned Hero virtually contains the Efficacy of all which can be alledged: For he grapled with all ſorts of Adverſity, loſs of Children, Goods, Houſes; endured all kinds of Miſery, Diſeaſes, Pains, Revilings, I will content my ſelf with having produced his, and the recommending it to you, to ponder in your Thoughts, and tranſcribe in your Practice the memorable Inſtances of his Patience; *Ye have heard of the Patience of Job, and have ſeen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.* Be ye alſo patient, ſtabliſh your Hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. It's his Example alone which St. *Baſil* in a Treatiſe on this Argument thinks fit to propound to our view: He counſels us to look upon this Champion, to compute the ſeveral Conflicts in which he was engaged and got the Maſtery, to reckon all the Darts the Tempter threw at him while he remained invulnerable againſt all, or received no mortal Wound, that we may be enabled to do the like; to put on the ſame Coat of Mail, that his Darts may no more pierce us than they

Jam 5. 11

Λόγ. ιγ'.

did him. Or in St. *Cyprian*'s Language, to observe the Darts he threw back again upon this Enemy of his, and with which he galled him sore, notwithstanding his Spiritual Nature, *i. e.* the Expressions of Patience he made, and the Praises and Thanks he returned to God under all his Afflictions; that we in the like Combats may learn to fight as he did.

But besides, the Example of this Upright Man before the Law, (for he was elder than *Moses*, by whose means God published that; tho' he was not the Grandchild of *Sem*, as some have thought, but rather a Descendent from *Nachor*, *Abraham*'s Brother; or, what's more probable, from *Esau*, being the Fourth or Fifth by his Line from *Abraham*, whereas *Moses* was the Sixth) and of the Prophets and Holy Men under it, whom I have designedly pretermitted, or but just pointed at and named, without giving you a particular Enumeration of their Sufferings, or a Description of their Behaviour. I might set before your Eyes the Apostles and Doctors, the Martyrs and Confessors of the Christian Church, whose Life was a constant Exercise, and their Death

V. & comp. *Gen* 36. 17. 33. 1 *Chr.* 1. 43, 44. 1 *Chron.* 5. 1, 2, 3.

Death the nobleſt, as well as the laſt Act of this Virtue, and the moſt convincing Demonſtration that they had been all along before trained up in the practice of it; were not the going about to enumerate, though the moſt Illuſtrious only of them, the undertaking a Task to compile a Voluminous Hiſtory; and if Time it ſelf ſhould not fail me in the purſuit of ſuch a Deſign, yet your Patience, which I would procure by them, might very well be tired out in peruſing them.

I will therefore withdraw my hand from any ſuch Attempt; only I cannot forbear to place in a tranſient Light before you, the Picture of this Virtue drawn from one of that Sex, whoſe Weakneſs we are too apt to reproach, and whom we are ready to cenſure as the moſt unfit for ſuffering or enduring what God inflicts with any Bravery. It is of *Melania*, for the Truth of whoſe Hiſtory St. *Jerome* who relates it, becauſe it might look as incredible, appeals to Chriſt as a Witneſs; ſhe having loſt two of her Sons, even while her Husbands Body was warm with the remains of that Vital Heat the Spirit which had deſerted it had left behind, inſtead of

S. Hieron. Epiſt. ad Paulam.

dropping one single Tear, or being any ways moved at this, threw her self at the Feet of her Saviour, and with a smiling Countenance, as if she held him, thus address'd her self to him, *I can now Lord serve thee with more ease and readiness, since thou hast freed me from so great a Burthen and Incumbrance as that of a Wife or Mother.*

I might likewise turn aside into profane History, and chuse out some excellent Persons from among the very Heathens, and set them in your view, that you might copy this Virtue even from them, (if you should despair imitating the Copies of Martyrs and Confessors, or the Saints of the first and best Ages of Christianity) such as were *Zeno Eleates*, *Anaxarchus*, *Theodorus*, who with an immovable Constancy of Mind endured all the Tortures the Tyrants *Phalaris*, *Nicocreon*, *Hieronymus* could inflict; of *Posidonius* and *Zeno* the *Stoick*, who amidst the Torments of Diseases as painful as glowing Bulls, or Racks or Wheels, cried not out so much as *Oh!* of *Anaxagoras*, *Pericles*, *Dion* of *Syracuse*, *Xenophon*, *Horatius Pulvillus*, &c. all as free from Amazement or Trouble when the

Cic. l. 3. Tusc. & de Consol. Val. Max. l. c. 3. &c.

the news of the Death of their Children was brought them; or as unconcerned in Paſſion, as Men are now a-days at the relation of Paſſages which happened a Thouſand Years before they were born.

But I forbear, as loath to diſgrace and ſhame my ſelf and Fellow-Chriſtians, who cannot look back on, or remember them without Bluſhes and Confuſion, to obſerve our ſelves with all the Advantages of more excellent Inſtructions, and the encouragement of Nobler Rewards, ſurpaſſed and outdone by them who had no better Aſſiſtances to further them in the attainment of this Virtue than Nature and Reaſon, the one weak and depraved, the other dim and blear-ey'd; nor any other Incentives to excite them, no other Motives to animate them thereto, than what a thirſt after Glory kindled, or a deſire to excel others inſpired.

And yet if the very hinting of them doth reproach us, they may at the ſame time raiſe in our minds a noble Scorn, a generous Diſdain to be out-ſtript in this Virtue by Infidels, and thence provoke us to an earneſt and diligent Contention to overtake them in that Path

they have trod before, or rather (becauſe this is too little) to go beyond them, and leave them as much behind us in the degrees of Acquirement, as the eldeſt of them hath us in time; that ſo our Heavineſs, our Slowneſs may not be a Blot on our Names; or what ought more to be regarded, on that of our Chriſtianity, that we be not a Scandal to the holy Diſcipline we profeſs, or derive any Diſreputation upon the Inſtitutor of it, the Lord Jeſus.

Indeed it hath been thought by one of as deep and as acute a Speculation as any of the Chriſtian Fathers, that the inflaming us with Emulation was one of the primary Reaſons why God admitted ſuch memorable Examples of Virtue among Pagans, as the Secondary was from the great Mixture that was in them of Vanity, being principled from an Ambition of Glory, and infected with an Itch of it, to confound us before his Throne of Judicature hereafter, if we ſhould not ſhew as much Patience and Conſtancy in ſuffering now in order to be ſaved as they did then to be damned.

Tertul. c 5. ad Marty. p. 158.

Since therefore Examples taken from Men have a more powerful Influence on

on Perſons than bare Precepts; more on their Underſtandings, as enlightning them with the Knowledge of their meaning, (which by reaſon of the Words they are expreſſed in, may be obſcure, or not ſo very clear; to which purpoſe St. *Iſiodore* hath affirmed, that the Actions of God's Saints are the beſt Expoſitions of his Scripture, and that which is almoſt taken for a Rule in Courts, That the Law is to be interpreted by Practice and Cuſtom) as convincing them of the feaſibleneſs of the things enjoyned by them to be done, or the poſſibility of ſuffering what's appointed by them, whereas theſe barely order them one way or other, without ſhewing the practicableneſs of either; as alſo a more powerful Influence on their Memories, making deep Impreſſions there, whereas thoſe leave no Images behind them any more than Ships cutting the Water with their Keels, or Birds parting the Air with their Wings do any Traces in the Elements; or if they leave any Signatures, they are almoſt as ſoon effaced, as Sounds loſe themſelves or die; and more upon the Affections too in moving them, as being let in by the quickeſt

§ 6. The Duty of Patience urged from the conſideration of the Example of God's Saints.

quickest Sence, Sight; or by the quicker and nimbler Faculty, the Imagination, whereas those enter by the slowest and dullest Sence, that of hearing.

Farther, since among Examples, those of Sufferings generally affect us more than those of Actions, the Reason of which proceeds from our Humanity, which is tender and compassionate, I shall make use of this Topick to recommend this Vertue to your Esteem and Practice, as St. *James* did the Example of the Prophets, *Take my Brethren the Prophets for an example of suffering Affliction and Patience.* And while I exhort you to the exercise of Patience, inforce the Exhortation from this Head of Argument, Example; which being the Method the Apostle hath taken on this Subject, pressing the Duty after an Enumeration of many illustrious Instances of it, I cannot better do it than in his Words. *Therefore since we also are encompassed with such a cloud of Witnesses, let us, laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, with Patience run the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of*

Jam. 1. 10.

Heb. 12. 1. & 24.

of our Faith, who for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs, deſpiſed the Shame, and is ſet down at the Throne of God.

Let us run the race of our natural Life, how uneaſie and painful ſoever that may be through Infirmities and Diſeaſes; how tedious and uncomfortable ſoever that may be made by ill Accidents and Circumſtances; for an interchangeableneſs at leaſt, of Diſeaſes and Health; of Calamity and Felicity, is a neceſſary part of our humane condition, and Life was given us upon theſe terms, and we hold it upon them, to bear theſe Incidents of it with Patience, and not be diſturb'd with what we cannot by any Care or Proviſion prevent; nor with any Diligence and Application remove; and the way ſuch as it is, was laid and chalked out for us by God's own Providence.

Let us run the race of our Chriſtian Life, how rough, how full of Hardſhips, how ſurrounded with Terrors and Dangers ſoever it may be, conſidering it as ſet before us by God with an Obligation to run it; that without running it there is no poſſibility of obtaining the glorious Prize for which it was

was instituted. For Running is pre-supposed as the fundamental Article and Condition to all others that are to be performed for the obtaining it, and are propounded for an Encouragement to run; and without running it with Patience, there can be no more carrying it away; for it hangs upon the Goal, and is to be taken thence by such only who run as far as that, which is not to be done without Patience; forasmuch as not supported by her Assistance, we shall grow faint and weary before we reach thither.

Heb.10.36 *Ye have need of Patience, that after ye have done the Will of God, ye might receive the Promise*, saith the same Apostle; *i.e.* This Virtue is necessary even after having done the Will of God in some measure, after having run the way of his Commandments for some time, that ye may keep on the same constant Course, and hold it out to the last, to the end ye may be made capable of receiving the glorious Rewards which he hath promised to bestow on such, who not contenting themselves in the performances of his Pleasure for a Spurt or Season, continue in well-doing unto the end.

Cer-

Certainly would we but take ſo much time as would ſerve to look round about us, and view that Army with Banners, which from the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Church encompaſs us; that Cloud of Witneſſes which from theſe two Coaſts overſhadow us; them eſpecially who have run the very ſame Race that is now before us with Patience, and for having done ſo, enjoy now a delightful Reſt from all their Labours, never to be diſturbed any more; are in the actual Poſſeſſion of an indefeaſible and inalienable Happineſs; or as would ſerve to look upwards to Jeſus the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, the Inſtitutor and Rewarder of it; and contemplate him, who for having deſpiſed the Torment and Scandal of the Croſs, eſteemed its Diſgrace a Glory, and its Pains a Pleaſure, with reſpect to his Fathers Will and Appointment, that he ſhould ſuffer this; and regard to the Glory he deſigned him for a Reward of his humble and patient Obedience, is ſeated on the right hand of the Throne of Majeſty in the higheſt Heavens, we ſhould through ſuch a Contemplation be animated to run

and

and finiſh ours with Patience, yea moreover, with Chearfulneſs.

Let us therefore, my Fellow Chriſtian Soldiers, bravely on after the Captain of our Salvation, where-ever he by his great Example leads the way, not turning our Backs through Cowardice, or lagging behind through Sluggiſhneſs; foraſmuch as on one hand it is a Reproach and a Crime too for Soldiers not to follow their Leaders; and on the other, having maſtered the Toyl of a ſhort March o'er this Spot of Earth, arrive we ſhall at Heaven, a Seat whoſe Manſions (for there are many) ſhall yield us everlaſting Refreſhments.

Let us follow ſuch who engaged in the ſame Warfare for which we have enrolled our Names, have gone before us treading in the ſteps of their, and our great General; let us, as they did, I mean the Martyrs and Confeſſors of the ſeveral Ages of the Church, keep cloſe to, and fight under his Imperial Banner, the Croſs; who for having by the Exploits they did, and Hardſhips they ſuffered, acquitted themſelves bravely, as good Soldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, are now with him their Victorious

ctorious Chieftane, celebrating one endleſs Triumph of Glory in *Hieruſalem* which is above, the City of the Living God.

Indeed having Arguments to convince us of the neceſſity and reaſonableneſs of this Duty; having ſuch Motives of Pleaſure and Advantage to encourage us to the exerciſe of it; having Examples on all hands, of the Patriarchs and Prophets before our Saviours taking Fleſh, and dwelling among us; of himſelf in the days of his Fleſh and Humiliation; and of his Diſciples, and all other holy Perſons who have ſucceeded ſince the time that he was taken up into Heaven, and received into Glory even until now, to excite us to the Practice of it; it is almoſt impoſſible, if we will attend to them, but that we ſhould emulate them; and upon meeting with the ſame occaſions as they did, imitate them in the ſame virtue too; and either living poſſeſs our Souls in Patience as they did; or dying, after their Example, ſo reſign them.

That we may therefore do ſo upon all Emergencies which require it, it will be needful to have all in readineſs before-

before-hand, *i. e.* The Precedents before our Eyes, and the Conſideration well fixt in our Memories; both I mean, muſt be the continual, or at leaſt the frequent Subject of our Meditations.

§ 7. Directions for the eſtabliſhing our Mind in Patience.

The Advice then that I would give you in this matter, and which I am willing my ſelf, by God's Aſſiſtance, to take and follow, for preventing the Diſquietude and Vexation which Afflictions uſually cauſe when they fall upon us, is, That we prepare our ſelves againſt that time and them with antecedent Conſiderations, as *Mithridates* for many years of his Life fortify'd himſelf againſt the Danger and Force of Poyſon by an habitual courſe of Antidotes.

§ 1. The Inevitableneſs of Afflictions and Calamities.

And the firſt Conſideration we ſhould be furniſhed with, is, That Troubles and Calamities are the ordinary and inevitable Incidents of Humane Life, God having in his Infinite Wiſdom thought good to order it ſo, as there ſhould be no enjoyment of Life without ſuffering Afflictions.

Great

Great Travel is created for every man, and a heavy yoak is upon the Sons of Adam, *from the day that they go out from their Mother's womb, till the day that they return to the Mother of all things; from him that ſitteth on the Throne of Glory to him that is humbled in Earth and Aſhes; from him that weareth Purple, and a Crown unto him that is cloathed with a Linnen Frock,* is the Obſervation which the wiſe Son of *Sirach* made of Humane Condition; or rather, was but repeated from the wiſeſt Man of the Eaſt, who abundantly experienced in his own particular what he affirmed of Mankind in general, *Man that is born of Woman is of few days, and full of miſery.* Crowded with Miſery, as the Cheſts or Baggs of the covetous Men are with Money; full of Anger, as the *Seventy* tranſlate it; or Commotion, as *Junius* renders it; *i. e.* of the occaſions of theſe Paſſions, as the cram'd Stomach of the Cormorant is of Meat.

1. In reſpect of our Humanity. Eccl. 9. 40. 1, 2, 3.

Job 14. 1.

We may all take up the Confeſſion of *Jacob* before *Pharaoh*, that the days of the years of our Pilgrimage are not only few, as they are, and have been ſince the great Reduction and

Gen. 47. 9.

Abbreviation of our Age after the Flood; but those few Evil likewise, as they have always been from *Adam*'s Fall.

It should seem by the Remark of *Sirach*, which consists indeed in Ninety Enumerations of the two extreme degrees of Mankind only, but by construction must comprehend the intermediate ones, which mentions only the first and last Stages of his Life, but by parity of Reason must be intended to the interjacent ones, That no Person of what Condition soever, no, not the highest by the favour of his place and station, is for any time, no, not for that which is scarce a part of time, is no space of it, a Moment, exempted or priviledged from sore Trouble. And indeed if Man is as much by Nature subjected to Trouble as the Spark is fitted by it to ascend, it is impossible that any Order of Mankind, their Rank not raising them above their Nature, should be secured and protected against it.

Cic de Consolat. in hanc mentem.

Man when he is born, comes into the World not so much a Lord and Governour of it, as a Slave subject to all Miseries and Inconveniencies, is what *Cicero* observes.

Id. ibid.

And

And as if by a Prophetick Spirit he foreſaw this ſhould be his caſe, he enters upon the firſt Scene of Life with Tears and Cries, lamenting as it were and complaining of his ſad Condition. The Son of *Syrach* hath well enough expreſſed this firſt ſtep he and all Mankind make into this Region of Life. *The firſt voice I uttered was crying, as all others do; for there is no King had any other beginning of Birth: For all men have one entrance into life, and the like going out of it.* Wiſd. 7. 3, 4, &c.

It was the Contemplation of *Theophraſtus*, That the World was a large Theatre filled by the Divine Mind, and for the manifeſtation of his Wiſdom and Greatneſs beautify'd with many reſplendent Ornaments; that in the midſt of it he placed Mankind to ſtruggle with Adverſity, Sorrow, Poverty, Diſeaſes, Pain, and the like innumerable ſad Contingences, while he in the mean time looks upon them to behold how they behave themſelves, and uſe that Courage they received from him to be employed occaſionally in ſuch Combats. *cic. ibid.*

No doubt there is to be made, but such a setled Opinion as this Philosopher conceived of God's bringing us into the World for this very end, to enter the Lists with Adversity, and his being a Spectator of the Fight, is of sufficient Force to make us behave our selves gallantly. And what then will not the Assurance we have from Divine Truth, that it is not only a Consequent, but one of the Ends God propounds in sending us into the World, to be tried and exercised by them; and that while we are so, he looks down on the Action, do of this kind?

The *Cyrenian* Philosopher finding by common Experience that Foresight of Trouble mightily impaired and broke its Force; and an expectation of it before-hand fortify'd Men to bear it when it came; whereas unlooked-for Accidents of that nature, and such as surprized them without any forethought, were apt to sink and overwhelm them, as suddain Storms and Hurricanes are to over-set the Vessels they find at Sea, wisely advised them to premeditate upon all Events, at least the usual Issues of Humane Affairs, the common and ordinary Contingencies

Cic. l. 3. Tusc.

of

of Life as the moſt excellent and Divine part of Wiſdom; but withal, to ſuppoſe nothing impoſſible to fall out, or wonder at it when it did. And tho' the *Epicureans* oppoſed this, as if that Evil might never happen, and it made Men uneaſie before their time, and the Affliction it cauſed when it did come upon us was enough. I think their Oppoſition and Exceptions were cauſeleſs.

Cicero, when he mentions this, ſuperadds the like Counſels of *Demopho* in *Terence*, and commends it; which was, that Men in the moſt flouriſhing Spring or Summer of their Condition ought eſpecially to conſider with themſelves, how they ſhould be able to bear a ſharp nipping Winter of Adverſity. A perſon returning homeward from hie Journey, ſhould revolve in his mind the Caſualties which might happen there in his Abſence, the Loſſes he might ſuffer in his Eſtate, the miſcarriages of his Children, their or his Wife's Sickneſs or Death, the Sentence of Baniſhment which may be awarded againſt him, and force him abroad again, to the end nothing might be ſtrange and ſurprizing, and to reckon

what he found otherwise than according to this Expectation he had raised, for Gain and Acquest.

The Advice though coming from a *Comœdian* and the *Roman* Stage, may be of great use for the Conduct of our Lives; and thence we may learn not only to esteem Misfortunes and Calamities as the familiar Companions of Humane Condition as belonging to it's Retinue; but frequently take a prospect of them in our Thoughts, consider them before-hand as such, that when they actually lighten upon us, we may be Masters of our selves and our Faculties, possess our Minds in all Sedateness, neither be disturbed by Sorrow, nor provoked by Anger, nor dejected by Pusillanimity.

The Poet makes the Personage in whom he intended to give us the perfect Idea of an Hero to consider all the Dangers and Difficulties he was to run through, before he could be setled and erect a Kingdom in *Italy*, and to return this Answer to the *Cumæan Sybil*, acquainting him with this part of his Future Fate, That no Toyl could be new to him, nor Danger in any Shape or Dress be affrightful or discouraging; for

for he had figured to himſelf all the kinds of them, and taken a view of them in his mind.

To this purpoſe in eaſie we ſhould think of hard Times, in the Flow of Plenty and Riches muſe of Poverty and Want; amidſt the Smiles and Blandiſhments of Fortune, as we term the going well of things on our part, to apprehend her Frowns and Severity.

Hannibal, the better to encline *Scipio* to hearken to the Propoſals of a Peace amidſt the Current of his good Succeſs, offer'd this to his Conſideration, That a Man whom Fortune had never hitherto deſerted or deceived, ought in Wiſdom to think of it's uncertainty, and the Chances which may be, and not look back only on what had happened, but forward alſo on what might. *Liv. l. 30. p. 545. ed. Elzevir.*

In Proſperity we ſhould arm our ſelves againſt the ſtroke of Adverſity; as the *Roman* Soldiers uſed in time of Peace to carry Baskets of Earth and Palliſadoes, as if they had been to encamp againſt an Enemy, to march once every Month Ten Miles a day in their Arms, as if they had been to fight; and to leap on and off their *Vegt. de re milit. l. 1. c. 8.*

Wooden Horſes, as if they had been engaged in Battel; in ſhort, to practiſe all the Arts, and endure all the Toyls of War, that they might be the more expert to manage live Horſes, and order themſelves in a real Fight, and the better inured to bear all it's true Fateigues and hardſhips; or as thoſe whom that State entertained for Mariners to ſerve on board their Fleet in the time of the firſt *Punick* War, learnt to ply their Oars while their Galleys were a building in their Docks, or equipping in their Harbours.

While we are encompaſſed with a multitude of Friends, we ſhould conſider that either they may forſake us upon ſome Diſtaſte or Diſaſter; or if their Conſtancy be ſo immovable, as they will not abandon us, yet they may be taken from us, becauſe they are but Earth animated with a little warm Breath for a time, and were born to die either before or after us; and that it's no more for what is mortal ſometime or other to die, than it is that a brittle Cup or Glaſs ſhould be broken in uſing at one time or other. And ſo we are to prepare our ſelves for receiving the loſs of other things, by thinking

thinking upon their Nature, that they are in themſelves corruptible and amiſſible, and that the Sum of every mans Life, however it may ſeem diſtinguiſhed by variety of Accidents, upon a juſt Calculation, will be found to be the ſame at the foot of the Account; the frail Creatures who ſhould periſh themſelves received Goods which ſhould periſh.

And that it's unreaſonable to expect to be exempted from the common ſhare of Misfortunes, abſurd to look to be priviledged above the reſt of Mankind; at the beſt, a groundleſs aſſuming to our ſelves to be the peculiar Favourites of God, and that the Dew of Heaven was to fall upon our Fleeces, while all about us was dry, that neither our Garments or our Hairs ſhould be ſinged, or the ſmell of Fire paſs upon us, while we walk'd in the Flames, though they ſhould conſume others.

Seeing therefore the Contemplation of the inevitableneſs of Calamity of one kind or other, not to be prevented by any Art or Care, prepares us againſt the time it makes its Aſſaults, and puts us into a poſture to receive it; weakens and abates it's force when it actually makes the

the Impreſſion; and moderates our Paſſions ſo, that they do not aid nor joyn with it to diſturb us; and that the attending in our Thoughts to God's being a Spectator from on high how we behave our ſelves, is what will give us new Life and Courage in the Conteſt. (For it was this Thought, as *Cæcilius* hath obſerved, which raiſed the Chriſtians Courage above the Threats of their Enemies, their Liberty above the Power of Kings and Princes, their Pleaſure above the Puniſhments and Torments they endured, made them inſult over their Judges as they condemn'd them, contemn the Grimneſs and Horror of their Executioner's Face and Dreſs, and the affrightful Horror with which their Death was ſet out, which all inſtructed them to gain what they contended for, the Crown of Martyrdom.) It would be no leſs advantageous than commendable piece of Prudence to make the one the frequent Subject of our Meditations; and to ſet the other before our Thoughts as an Obſerver of our Deportment, in order to be a Rewarder of it as a Judge hereafter.

Minut. Fœl. Dialog.

(2.) Con-

(2.) Consider we ought that we have reduced our selves to the necessity of Afflictions as the just and deserved Punishment for the manifold Offences we have committed against the Majesty of God; and we are to look on these as the occasion and procuring Cause of those. For, as it is well observed by *Eliphaz*, *Affliction cometh not out of the Dust, neither doth Trouble spring out of the ground*; *i. e.* Their Original is not fortuitous, as that of Mushrooms or Weeds, or the like things, (which shoot out of the Earth all of a sudden in a night, or a Thunder Shower, or things without any Order and Method) seems to be: Nor yet have they a natural Cause, as Plants propagated from their proper Seeds committed to the Ground, and form'd and actuated by it's seminal Vertue have; but a moral and meritorious one, which is our sins.

S. 7. § 2. Consid. That we have reduced our selves to the necessity of suffering Troubles as a Punishment for our sins Job 5. 6.

The Transgression of our first Parents gave the first Rise to Trouble, brought it with it self as a Companion or Attendant into the World, or drew it after its self as its proper Reward.

Then

Then by way of equal Recompence for having eat of that Fruit God forbad them, he condemned Man to eat for ever after of the Fruit of the Ground in the Sweat of his Brow; and the Woman to bring forth hers (for Children are the Fruits of the Womb) in Pangs and Sorrow.

Job 5. 6. Gen. 3. 16, 17, 18, 19.

N. 1. They are Punishments which our sins have merited.

Their Disobedience administred to their Affliction, and God doom'd them to Labour and Pain, as fit Chastisements for their Luxury, in tasting that Food which lay under a particular Interdict of his, and used these as suitable means for the avenging himself, and vindicating his Honour, which they had insolently affronted by going directly against his express Command.

Immediately upon this, as the Earth by God's Curse upon it for Man's sake brought forth Briars and Thorns to molest him, which is what the Scripture affirms; and prickles began to grow up with the Rose-tree to scratch their Hands if they would gather them, which is what St. *Basil* and St. *Ambrose* have deliver'd upon this Point: So Sorrow and Trouble, and Care and Pain began to disquet and vex, to prick and

S. *Basil. in Hexaem. Hom.* 13. S. *Ambros. Hexaem. l.* 5. *c.* 11.

and tear their Minds. This was the first Nativity of them; and ever since Sin hath continued to be the fruitful Parent of them; and Men cease not to bring them upon their own Heads, by the Error of their ways, and the Works of their own Hands. *Our ways and our doings procure them unto us*; as God tells *Israel* of her Calamities; *Fools* (such are all the Workers of Wickedness, and such are we all) *because of their Transgression, and because of their Iniquities are afflicted.*

Wisd. 1. 12

Jer. 4. 18.

Ps. 107. 17.

Since therefore God was provoked at first by Man's Impieties and Iniquities to treat him so roughly; and the daily renewing of those provokes him now to repeat the same usage; we ought in all reason to bear the Calamity we have brought upon our selves by our sins, especially since we have not been only caution'd against every one of them by a direct or virtual, but plain Prohibition of them, but had express notice of those very dismal Consequences being entailed upon them.

For it's very inequal to complain of God, and murmur against him for having made our selves miserable; to speak

v. S. *Ambrose, ut supr.*

ſpeak hardly of him for the Troubles we have raiſed, and the Difficulties we have created to our ſelves. The Prophets Expoſtulation about it implies the Abſurdities of ſuch a Behaviour, ---*Why doth the living man complain for the puniſhment of his ſins?* Lam. 3. 39. Nor is his arguing and thus debating the caſe with Man a ſharper Remonſtrance againſt the Iniquity of a froward Carriage under Afflictions, than the Churches Reſolution under hard and preſſing Circumſtances, as it is declared by another Prophet, to take a flat contrary Courſe, and quietly ſubmit under her diſtreſſed Condition, a plain Note and Direction how we ought to demean our ſelves, —*I will bear, ſaith Jeruſalem*, the Church there, *the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him. I will bear the ſtroke of the Lord*, as the *Arabick* and *Syriack* Tranſlations have rendred it, *viz.* My Deſolation is my own, and my Captivity and Bondage in a Foreign Land; foraſmuch as my Offences have merited his Anger, and it was but Juſtice and Congruity that I ſhould behold the manifeſtation of it in all theſe Tokens, or feel it in all theſe effects upon me. Mich. 9. 3.

Eli's

Eli's Reſolution to ſubmit patiently to God's Pleaſure, the ſignification of which was brought him in that terrible Denunciation *Samuel* had command to deliver him; *That he would judge his Houſe for ever for the Iniquity he knew of*; as he declared it in the Anſwer he made thereupon, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*, was not form'd meerly upon a Conſideration, that by his Power he was able to do all this, and there was no reſiſting or oppoſing that, but was the reſult of an inward Conviction, that ſuch a proceedure would be juſt; being conſcious that his Sons had made themſelves vile, and as much as in them lay, the Offerings of the Lord, and their holy Order, by their Rapine, and Violence, and Uncleanneſs; and he had not refrained or checked them for this, by interpoſing his Paternal and Sacerdotal Authority as he ought: And the Judgment of that Faculty forced him to conclude thereupon, That they for the Villany they had committed, and he for his tame Connivance at it, had deſerved to ſuffer all that was contained in the threatning Meſſage.

1 Sam. 2. 13. & 18.

Heze-

Hezekiah's Reply to the Prophet *Isaiah*, when he had discharged himself of what he had in Commission and Instruction from God to acquaint him with, *&c.* The uncomfortable prediction, That his Imperial City and Pallace should be sack'd and pillaged, his Royal Treasury and Wardrobe plundered and emptied; his Posterity and Offspring made Prisoners of War, and carried away Captive by the Armies of *Babylon* into a strange Country, where, in the mean Quality of Slaves, they should be forced to serve Imperious Lords in the vilest Offices. *Good* [*Gracious*] *is the Word of the Lord which thou hast spoken.* And he said, *Is it not good, if Peace and Truth be in my days?* was a magnifying God's Clemency in the Affair, and so was more than a bare and pure acknowledgment of his Justice in so dealing.

2 Kings 20. 19.

And the very Consideration that the Sentence, which tho in what it concern'd his Posterity it was extremely just, was yet qualified with abundance of Mercy, as it respected his own Person, staid up his Spirits under the dismal Prospect of so

ſo much Miſery which was to involve his Children and People, his Family and Kingdom, as it were with a Cordial Refreſhment. He comforted himſelf with this, *That Peace and Truth ſhould be in his days.*

The 6*th.* Of thoſe Brethren in the Hiſtory of the *Machabees*, who were the Renowned Martyrs the Jewiſh Church hath to boaſt of, looked upon thoſe exquiſite Torments that *Antiochus* and the Miniſters of his Cruelty had deviſed for his and their Vexation, and to bring them to a renouncing and abjuring their Religion, as the ill uſage which their tranſgreſſing the Law of the moſt holy God had procured him to permit in Puniſhment for it, as the due and deſerved Reward of their ſins, and making this Reflection, he heartned himſelf chearfully to embrace the Death, and it's Preparatives, which were before his eyes.

Be not deceived, ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to both Tormentors and Spectators, *for we ſuffer thoſe things for our ſelves, having ſinned againſt God, and therefore marvellous things are done by him unto us.* 2 Mach. 7. 18.

The *Byzantine* Hiſtory reports of *Mauritius* their Emperor, that beholding the barbarous Murther committed before his Face on Four of his Sons by the Traytor and Uſurper *Phocas*, amidſt the dire Spectacles he acknowledged the Divine Juſtice, repeating often that of the Pſalmiſt, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and juſt are thy Judgments*; and with this Meditation prepared himſelf for his own Aſſaſſination, and with thoſe Words in his Mouth for the laſt finiſhing ſtroke of it.

Pſal. 119. 137.

And now had we, when afflicted, this firm Perſwaſion, that the Judgments of the Lord are true, and that he of very faithfulneſs hath cauſed us to be corrected, that it is but the Reward of our own Demerits, that our ſins have made the Proviſion of all the Evil we feel; and demanded the Infliction of what we ſuffer from God's Juſtice as a reaſonable Puniſhment for what we have done amiſs, or if we were ſo perſwaded, did our Thoughts ſometimes dwell with this Truth, as theirs did, whoſe Behaviour I have recommended to be our Example to imitate, or our Reproach to ſhame us, our Courage to meet Adverſity and Troubles

bles, in whatſoever Shape they preſented themſelves and our Conſtancy in ſupporting them would be inferiour to none of theirs.

Origen in the Treatiſe he wrote to encourage Chriſtians to undergo Martyrdom when offered them, which it always is, when it cannot be declined without ſinning againſt God, makes uſe of this inſtance of the young *Machabees* to provoke us to it, unleſs we will be ſhamed by Children, and appear to have leſs Manhood than they, who enduring not only the Torments that were inflicted on their own Perſons, but the Indignities likewiſe each one of their Brethren, while they were conſtrained to behold them, gave the nobleſt Proof and the moſt illuſtrious Mark of the Proweſs of Piety. *Orig. Exhort. ad Martyr.* p. 184.

But I am not now animating you or my ſelf to Martyrdom, or to put on a Conſtancy proper for that Eſtate: And yet we ought to be always Martyrs in purpoſe of Reſolution; if I had ſaid *deſire*, I had not been miſtaken; and it being the greateſt Honour a Chriſtian is poſſibly capable of in this World, to die for his Maſter, I ſhould think there would be no need of Exhortations and

Arguments to perswade such an one to suffer that with Patience, which he ought to embrace, in some sence to run upon, with chearfulness; my Business in this place is to incline you and my self to receive the ordinary Incidents of humane Life, how vexatious and troublesom they usually prove through the Indisposition or Depravation of our Minds, with Patience; and that upon a right sence and due Conviction, that we have deserved them as Punishments for our sins. But this Consideration which I use for the introducing such a Temper into our Minds may be yet farther urged, and pressed closer home for this purpose, That Afflictions are not Punishments absolutely; (and yet if they were so, and adequate to our sins, we have no reason to be disturb'd for being punish'd, but to be angry with our selves and our own Folly, who have deserved to be so) but Punishments less than our Deserts, and so we ought rather to be thankful for the Abatement of our Correction, than froward because we are corrected at all. *Ezra*, while
Ezr. 9. 13 he had deplored the Calamities that were come upon his Country and Nation,

tion, acknowledged before God, that he had puniſhed them leſs than their Iniquities deſerved.

They are ſent in mercy as well as executed in Truth. All his ways have both theſe. The *Levites* on a ſolemn Day of Humiliation before God, recognize this, that God while he was juſt in the Subverſion of the Jewiſh State, yet did not utterly conſume them, *becauſe he was a gracious and merciful God.* 2. Albeit they are Puniſhments, yet they are leſs than we have deſerved. Pſa. 25. 10. Neh. 9. 31.

Jeremiah reflecting on the Deſolation of that People, confeſſed it was mitigated with Clemency. *It is of the Lords Mercies that we are not conſumed, becauſe his Compaſſions fail not.* They are all inflicted in kindneſs, as well as deſerved by Juſtice. *I know, O Lord, that thy Judgments are right,* [Righteouſneſs] *and that thou of very faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me,* was the Pſalmiſts Acknowledgment. The Rod he corrects us with is like that of *Jonathan*'s dipt in Honey; and while he ſmites, he tenderly compaſſionates us: And if at the ſame time that he wounds he doth not heal, nor bind up as ſoon as he breaks, yet he hath all the ſoft Bowels of a good *Samaritane,* Lam. 3. 22. Pſa. 119. 75

and is ready to do all those Offices, as soon as we repent and turn to him.

The Cup of Gall he gives us to drink is tempered and mixt, and he remembers Mercy while in Justice he writes bitter things against us. His grieving us is with unwillingness, for we are the Causes of it, and that is in
Lam. 3. 32. compassion to us.

These two Considerations will make us to do what we ought, and St. *Pe-*
1 Pet. 5. 6. *ter* exhorts us to *Humble our selves under the mighty hand of God.* And if we have not these Reflections, our Carriage will be froward and proud; we shall speak contumeliously of God, and insolently demand, Who is the Lord, that we should quietly submit to his afflicting hand? Or gently kiss the Rod of Iron with which he bruiseth or breaks us in pieces? That we should reverence and adore him while he condemns and executes us?

For that we are inclin'd thus to vent our Passions against the Deity, and usually do so while we suffer from him, if our low Opinion of our own Vileness, and so consequently of our suffering worthily what we do, and less than what we have merited, restrains us not within

within the Bounds of Modeſty and Decency, common Experience is able to inform us. And indeed this was long ago taken notice of by a Philoſopher of great eſteem, to be the humour of Mankind, and his Obſervation hath left us this account of it and them, That upon any great Misfortunes or Calamity they ſtreight conclude *Jupiter* hath no kindneſs for them. And then advancing farther upon that Miſtake and wrong Inference, cry out, What have we to do with him? For either he cannot help us out of our Miſeries; or if he can, he will not, which is worſe: And this proceeding from this careleſs neglect, they at laſt arrive at a down-right Defiance of him, declaiming againſt building of Temples and rearing Altars to him; and take upon them to maintain, That they have no more reaſon to worſhip him than Fevers which moleſt them, or Ghoſts which haunt them.

Arian. l. 1. c. 22. p. 141. ed. Cantab.

Thus thoſe in the *Revelation* on whom the Angels emptied ſome of the Vials of God's Judgments, blaſphemed the God of Heaven, becauſe of their Pains and of their Soars. Rev. 16. 11

But if it were possible to bear the Ills of this Life patiently, without a profound and humble Sence of our own baseness, such as renders us worthy to suffer them, and more; yet as this false Gallantry would be but the Counterfeit of this Vertue, not it; so it would not hold out to the last, but would flinch and recoyl sometime or other, or betray it's self by its wincing in private, or by it's open Vanity.

That Philosopher, who unconcerned had bore all the Contumelies and Reproaches which a Person, who had a mind to try his Patience, could devise to heap upon him, when he told his provoking Adversary, *Now, Sir, I hope you are satisfied I am a Philosopher*: Received this sharp Retort from him, *I had indeed, had you been silent.*

N. 3. That God may and will punish us farther for our Impatience.

We are farther to consider, That as our Punishments are less than we have deserved, and that God may in Justice equal them to the proportiou and measure of our sins, and by his Omnipotence can do so; so the not submitting quietly to his hand when it is light in comparison of our Merits, will probably

bly provoke his Anger to aggravate the Inflictions, and to create a Puniſhment on purpoſe for the Chaſtiſement of a new Sin, our Impatience. As Maſters and Parents are oft ſtirred up by the Obſtinacy and Frowardneſs of their Servauts or Childron to correct them more ſeverely than at firſt they deſigned.

And indeed, if we were not aw'd through this Conſideration, inſtead of a meek and humble Deportment of our ſelves, inſtead of an even and ſedate Temper, we ſhould be ready in high Diſcontent and Fury to caſt about with our ſelves, whether we might not ſome way or other, in diſpight of him, wind our ſelves out of our Afflictions.

The Prophet *Eliſha* ſeeing no end of h Troubles, but like Waves one rolling upon the back of another, and upon a ſuddain apprehenſion of the Danger he was in of being ſeized by the King himſelf, was through Inconſideration of this tranſported ſo far, as to renounce any longer depending or confiding in God, *Behold this Evil is of the Lord! What ſhall I wait for the Lord any longer?* 2 King. 6. 32.

And

And if a Prophet of so great Sanctity was thus violently carried away unto a discarding God as it were, at least from being the God of his hope, it will be no Marvail if some, nay, if multitudes are so ill-disposed, as the infamous Person in the Poet was, That when they cannot incline Heaven to ease them, they will seek for a Relief from Hell, knock at its Gates, and try the Power and Mercy of Devils either to deliver them out of their Troubles, or rebate them.

When they have suffered their Minds to be perplex'd with an anxious Sollicitude of knowing the Event of any Affair they have taken in hand, or of some important Design set on foot in the World, or the end of some present Trouble they lie under; to satisfie this, they will be apt to consult Wizards and Southsayers, as *Saul* did the Witch of *Endor* to be resolved of the Fortune of a Battel. Or as *Ahaziah* enquired of the Devil of *Ekron*, *Beelzebub*, whether he should recover of his Fall.

1 Sam. 28. à 7. ad 20.

So when they are assaulted by a Disease, whose continued and importunate Pains makes them restless, prone they

they will be to reſort to Phyſicians as the ſole or prime Agents for removing them without ſo much as looking up to him, or at leaſt without imploring his Benediction, in whoſe hands are the Iſſues of Life and Death, who woundeth and healeth, *who bringeth down to the Grave, and raiſeth up again*; as that which hath the principal Vertue and Efficacy in all Cures, and makes their Preſcriptions ſucceſsful; which was *Aſa*'s Fault. 2 Chron. 16. 12.

But more than all this, beſides the conſidering Afflictions as the inevitable Lot of our Condition as Men; and this unavoidableneſs brought upon us by our ſins, as Malefactors by their Crimes bring the Puniſhments they ſuffer upon their own Heads; we who are call'd by the Name of Chriſt are to regard the neceſſity of meeting with them doubled and trebled upon us from our Calling, from the end and deſign of it on God's Part, and the Obligation ariſing from it on our own. S. 7. § 3. Conſid. 3. The neceſſity of Afflictions in regard of our Chriſtian Calling. And that (1.) from God's Ordination.

The Divine Wiſdom hath appointed *that all who would live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhould ſuffer Perſecution*; Perſecution of one ſort or other, of the Tongue or the Sword, from Enemies N. 1. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

or

Act. 19. 23. Mat. 7. 13. or from Crosses; it hath made *this way*, as it is eminently call'd, always rough, by reason of its Precepts and Restraints very irksom and repugnant to Flesh and Blood; and in every part of it streight and narrow, allowing no liberty to do the least Evil, though the most grateful and acceptable to our Inclinations or Temper; though the most profitable and advantagious, and such as shall be compensated with a publick Good; and sometimes extremely dangerous to those who take it, and dare own they do so, and will not be put out of it.

And he hath made it thus, and appointed the taking up of the Cross as a Condition of our Profession, or of living up to it for the Trial of our Obedience, which could not be experimented, if every thing he required was suitable to onr own Minds, and the recommendation of it likewise, which would be very insignificant, and not thank-worthy, if the way of his Commandments was all on a Carpet, strew'd with Roses, and those without any Prickles, or all as soft as down; yea, hardly deserve that Name, if it were not to be exercised and manifested in some

ſome Inſtances of Difficulty and Peril. And indeed this laſt hath been deem'd ſo neceſſary to our Chriſtianity, that the very Blood which flow'd from the opened Pores of our Saviours natural Body in his Agony, hath been interpreted a Signification and Repreſentation of the Blood which ſhould flow from all the parts of his Myſtical Body, the Church. *S. Proſper Sentent. ex Auguſt.*

And now what is that Man, who expects God ſhould make a way to Heaven free from ſuch Hardſhips for his uſe only. He is too tender to be a Chriſtian, who thinks to go eaſily to Heaven, or too much a Fool in eſteeming that Pleaſure, which the World miſcalls ſo.

However it is certain, that we are bound by all the Ties and Force of Gratitude to lay down our Lives for him in return of his Love, who laid down his Life for us; and in conſequence of that Example of his, without any particular Precept ſo to do: For if we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren, reflecting that he laid down his Life for us; much more ſtrongly muſt we be obliged by the Example 1 Joh. 3. 16 4. 11.

ample of so great Love, to lay down our Lives for him.

And this Obligation reaches to two Cases more peculiarly; either (1.) When the parting with our Lives is the only convincing Argument we can offer in Proof of the Truth and Sincerity of our own Faith. Or, (2.) When such an Oblation is necessary for the Service of our Brethren's Faith; absolutely or highly requisite to sustain their staggering Faith that it sink not, or to preserve their languishing one, that it doth not finally fail.

Upon such occasions as these we are
Col. 1. 24. to do what St. *Paul* did, *fill up what is behind of the Afflictions of Christ in our Flesh*, (even by suffering in it) *for his Bodies sake, which is the Church*; not as if there was any thing deficient in his personal Sufferings to render his Satisfaction and Reconciliation through it compleat, and we could supply it; but that we might help to fill up that measure of Sufferings which his mystical Body of the Church, (with which he is one Person) was appointed by the Father to undergo by way of Service, Probation, Confirmation or Example.

We

We our ſelves have agreed to carry Chriſt's Yoak, how heavy ſoever he ſhould make it; have entred into Obligations of ſuffering all the Hardſhips of this Warfare, even of reſiſting unto Blood: We did ſo when we took him to be our Maſter, when we liſted our ſelves to be the Soldiers of Chriſt, and ſo are under a neceſſity of fulfilling them. We engaged then to fight manfully under his Croſs, even unto Death; for what elſe can the *continuing his Faithful Soldiers unto our Lives end* imply? We ſubmitted to the Condition propounded by him, of taking up his Croſs and bearing it after him, and following him in the way that he went before, and promiſed Performance.

N. 2. From a voluntary Obligation of our ſelves.

We vow'd and devoted our ſelves, as to all other Sufferings, ſo to Martyrdom eſpecially: And as by vertue of that Dedication we ought conſtantly to be Martyrs in reſolution, while we have not the occaſion of conſummating that Vow, and making an actual Oblation of our Blood, as the Blood of the ſlain Victims was poured out upon the Altar, and ſo offered to to him; or of giving up our Bodies to be burnt, as their Fleſh was conſumed

in

in the Fire; so when we have the occasion presented to us, we are bound to comply with it; and at that time if we do, we shall be accepted as Martyrs by him, and rewarded with their Crowns.

Upon both of these Accounts then it remains, that we our selves knowing (as having bin therewith acquainted before-
1 Thess 3 3 hand by our great Lord and Master) that we are appointed unto Afflictions, ought not to be thereat moved; and having besides submitted our selves to be ordered, we are not to *reckon the Fiery Tri-*
1 Pet. 4. 12 *al which is to try us, strange*, or be surprized when we are put upon it, or that kind of Question actually administred to us, as if some strange thing hapned unto us.

And if Premonitions and Advice before-hand will leave no room for a Surprizal with Wonder or Amazement; nor our own Engagements to suffer, any place for Fear to seize us when Afflictions do actually fall upon us; certainly they will take from us all manner of Excuse or Colour of Justification, if we are impatient under them; but most infallibly deprive us of the Honour of Martyrdom and its Reward; what-

whatever be the fair opportunity which invites us to embrace it: For Impatience in ſuffering looks to have ſo much Averſion on one hand, and Conſtraint on the other, as is not conſiſtent with Martyrdom, which muſt be a Free-will Offering, and a chearful one, at leaſt not ſo with that Charity, which muſt commend the Oblation of our ſelves to God's acceptance. The Sufferings of Man, though they be unto Death, and even for the Cauſe of Religion, can never be an Offering of a *ſweet Savour, acceptable to God*, any more than a Beaſt that was haled and dragged to the Altar, was ever reckon'd of old to make an acceptable Sacrifice to an Idol.

S. 7. § 4. Conſid. 4. In regard of obtaining the reward we hope for from our Calling.

But beſides looking back and conſidering the Neceſſity of ſuffering Afflictions from God's Appointment, and the Annexion of them to our Chriſtian Calling; and from our own Engagement to do ſo, when we enter'd upon it; we may, yea, ought to look forward, and ſo doing we ſhall deſcry the conditional Neceſſity there is of this, if we would obtain the end of our Hope; the ſtrict and inſeparable Connexion there is between ſuffering now,

and being exalted to the highest Honours and Dignities, enjoying the most perfect and unmixt Happiness hereafter.

For it is determined, that *through much tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; that we must suffer with our Maker, before we can reign with him; be planted into the likeness of his Death* (and we know how painful and how scandalous that was) *before we can be into the likeness of his glorious Resurrection*; we must *run*, we must strive, we must *fight* before we can be capable of being *Crown'd*; go through much Tribulation, before we can enter into Joy: As they who were arrayed in White Robes, the Habit and Emblem of Festivity and Triumph, did.

Acts 14.22
2 Tim. 2. 12.
Rom. 6.
1 Co. 9. 25.
2 Tim. 2. 5
Luk. 13. 24
Rev. 14. 4.

This is the Order, and but a reasonable one, and such as is observed in all humane Institutions, that the Performance of the Exercise should precede the dispensing of the Reward.

And after the observance of this, he hath bound himself by his Word, by his Solemn Promise, by his Oath, to make us that Recompence mentioned; which in great Condescension to us, and for our

our encouragement to ſuffer for ſo great an one, he hath put his making us a Retribution, though we can never deſerve it by our Sufferings, ſo altogether improportionable to it upon natural Equity as it were. *It is a righteous thing with God*, ſaith the Apoſtle writing to the *Theſſalonians, to recompenſe to you who are troubled, Reſt.* He ſeems to make it the ſame Degree of Righteouſneſs to deal ſo with him, as to deal ſo with them, as to recompenſe Tribulation to thoſe who troubled them. *I have fought a good fight*, ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, meaning according to the acceptance of the Appointer, not the ſtrict Laws of the Combat, *I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteouſneſs, which the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day; and not unto me only, but unto all thoſe that love his appearing.*

2 Theſſ. 1. 6, 7.

2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.

Indeed, was the Acqueſt of that Kingdom, that Sovereignty, that Crown, and the obtaining that Reſt free from all Diſquiet and Turmoil, (to which all Crowns here are abſolute Strangers, and ſo much the greater Strangers, as

they are greater in the Compass) to be made without suffering any Labour or Pains, or running any Danger, without one drop of Sweat or Blood; the easiness of gaining them was enough to sink them so low in our Esteem, as to make them despicable, and so consequently to deprive us of them; when from being lessened and slighted in our Thoughts, they would come to be judged not worth contending for, or indeed looking after. For it is the Fate of all things which are easily procurable, to be undervalued, let their intrinsick Worth be what it will, or as great as can be; while on the other hand, that which is vile in it self, and of no Benefit but what fond and false Opinion supposeth, if it be far fetch'd, and dear bought, with Travel and Hazard, is usually priz'd at a great and excessive rate.

If then we are ambitious of Reigning, aspire after Kingdoms, and Crowns, and Scepters, which may be had without Injustice to any, though not without Violence to our selves; are desirous of Happiness, or pant after a place of Rest, and would have these Passions satisfied by an agreeable Gratification; we

we muſt fight the good fight of Afflictions, and ſuſtain, endure the Fight, as becometh good Soldiers with Patience; becauſe the obtaining of thoſe, and thereby our everlaſting Content depends upon this.

We are to carry our Conſideration yet higher, than looking upon them as the neceſſary Attendants and Conſequences of Humane Life, of our Chriſtian Calling, and as Terms that we ſubmitted unto when we entred upon it, and view them under another Light, regarding them what they oft-times are, as the Reſult and Indications of Divine Favour, rather than the Effects and Tokens of his Diſpleaſure, that they are ſent to aſſiſt us to come to a right knowledge of our ſelves, for the vigorous Confirmation of our Virtues, which would languiſh and decay were they not raiſed and quickned by ſuch Conteſts, for the Approbation of them by himſelf after ſueh a Trial, and the Recommendation of them as Examples to the imitation of others. S. 7. § 4. We are to conſider them not only as ſent from Divine Juſtice, but by his Clemency to reform us, and prevent the inflicting more terrible ones.

A Heathen Philoſopher ſaw the neceſſity of ſome ſuch Perſwaſion as this towards the patient ſupporting of Evil Accidents, when he adviſeth Men in

those cases to make these or the like Reflections, and cautions us when we see good Men haled to Prison, or shipt for Transportation, their Powers small, and their Fortunes scanty, or perhaps to have neither of those at all, or perhaps fastned to a sick and painful Bed altogether, against imagining that their ill circumstances proceed from God's Anger, or are the Marks of it; because, as he with great Sobriety of Reason, and perhaps with a better of Religion than many Christians, argues, That Goodness in the Deity which restrains him from hating the worst, will not allow him to abhor and detest the best of Men; or how can his Providence leave the most considerable neglected or unregarded, when his Care condescends to watch over the least and meanest of his most numerous Family.

V. Sen. c. 2. de Provid. Arian. l. 3. c. 24. p. 343 ed. Cant.

We are to look upon Afflictions as sent by him rather to reform us, and make us better for the time to come, than to punish us for what's passed and done amiss; or if sent to punish us with a Retrospect to Crimes committed, yet as sent in part only for that end and purpose, being sent part like-

likewiſe in loving kindneſs to prevent his being neceſſitated to commiſſionate more heavy and dreadful Puniſhments if we ſhould go on in ſin.

For the Sufferings of this Life are intended as Warnings to make us break off the courſe of our Sins, and to turn unto him as the only way we can take to eſcape eternal Torments. *Bleſſed is the man*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *whom thou chaſtneſt, and teacheſt him out of thy Law, that thou mayſt give him reſt from the days of adverſity, that he may not periſh with the World.* Pſal. 94. 12

We are to believe he makes uſe of Adverſity and Troubles, and bodily Diſeaſes and Pains, as Chyrurgions do of their Inciſion Knives, their Saws, their Lances, their Cauſticks, not as delighted with the Cruelty of mangling, lopping, wounding, ſearing, burning; but becauſe they find a neceſſity of taking thoſe Methods for the ſaving of their Patients Life: So that what ſeems Cruelty to his Perſon, proceeds from a tender regard to the Preſervation of it: For while a corrupted or gangreened Limb is thus handled, it's in pity to the reſt of the Body, which by this means is ſaved from the Contagion and ſpread- *Baſ. T. 4. Hom. 7.*

ing Infection of that part, and consequently from perishing thereby. Or as Physicians prescribe a Dose of Aloes, Rhubarb, Scammony, Gentian, or some such disagreeable Drugs to be taken in Pills or Potions; not that they love to chagrine their Patients, but kindly design to recover them out of a disorderly habit of Body to a right state of Health by those Salutary, although disaffecting Receipts.

The Reflection of *Tertullian* on the dangerousness of his Condition, if God should not use such a Medicinal course with him as that of Afflictions is, made him say, He should suspect and be afraid of such an Indulgence of the Lord, as not a real kindness, and which obliged St. *Austin* to caution us against congratulating a who Man prospers in his wicked ways; whom God vouchsafes not to check by some severe Animadversion; because instead of favouring such an one, the Lord is incensed to such a degree against him, that he will not let him suffer; that is, he will not correct him with the Scourge of Adversity.

This

This put St. *Bernard* upon praying, That God would take ſome ſevere and ſharp Method with him here, for his Cure now, and Safety hereafter; *Cut me, ſlaſh me, ſear and burn me, O my God, here*, was a Petition in his Devotions, *that I may not be torn and racked thro' with Whips and Scorpions, or broil amidſt ſcorching and unquenchable Flames of Brimſtone hereafter.* *S. Bern. hom. 42. in Cant.*

To this purpoſe the good Emperor *Mauritius*, upon a Monk's carrying a naked Sword thro' the Streets of his chief City of *Conſtantinople*, and predicting thereupon his ſudden and lamentable end, That he ſhould periſh by the Sword, which had left on his Spirits an Impreſſion as deep as if it were a Propheſie which came by Inſpiration, or a Meſſage ſent immediately from Heaven, directed forthwith Supplications to be made by the Church on his behalf, That God would be pleaſed to require from him the Puniſhment of his Sins in this World, and not defer the Execution of it to another.

The

Cedron. Nicephor. l. 8. c. 35, 36, 37, 38. P. Diacon. l. 17. Simocatta l. 8. c. 11.

The Authors who relate this Passage add further, that the great Judge of Mankind, Jesus Christ, appearing to him in a Vision seated on the Throne of Judicature, and demanding of him where he would chuse to receive the deserved Recompense of his Offences, the Wages of his Iniquity, whether in this present or the future state of Life, he return'd for Answer immediately this Request. *O Lord, Just Judge, but yet affectionate Lover of Mankind, inflict the Punishment I have incurred on me now, lay on me what I have deserved here, and respite not my Execution to hereafter.*

Did we consider alike as he did, that the Sufferings we are so ready to complain of were in prevention of more terrible ones, were Medicinal, not Penal Corrections; for Amendment, not Executions upon Condemnation, we should not desire to have the Rod taken off from our Back, for fear lest we should be barr'd of our Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Were we conversant with such Meditations as these, that God feedeth his own People which prayeth with the Bread of Tears, and gives them plen-

Psal. 80. 5, 6.

teousness

teouſneſs of Tears to drink, Diets them with the Bread of Wormwood and Water of Gall; that Afflictions are the Signs by which he diſcriminates his Favourites from his ordinary Servants, his beloved Children from the reſt, from the common general Maſs of Mankind, of which he is the common Parent, that they are the Teſtimonies of his tender Paternal Affection to them, and he ſendeth them induced by Charity, not moved in Anger, as Tokens and Pledges of his Love: (*For whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth.*) And had we, when exerciſed by them, ſufficient reaſon to eſteem them ſuch to us, the Proofs of our Adoption, and our being highly favoured by our Heavenly Father; certainly there would be no need of an Exhortation to preſs us to bear them with a quiet Spirit, it being the natural Conſequence of our Filial Relation, or the Obligation ariſing thence to demean our ſelves ſo.

As Paternal Corrections, and ſo as marks of Paternal Affection.

Heb. 12. 6.

I am ſure the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* deduceth this as a matter of Duty from that; *Furthermore, we have had Fathers of our Fleſh; which corrected* Heb. 12. 9.

rected us, and we gave them reverence: Shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of Spirits, and live?

Nay, the Reason on this side for a patient Subjection to the Father of Spirits when corrected by him, is of much more Weight and Force, than on the other side for paying Reverence to our Fathers according to the Flesh, when we are so dealt with by them; or the Argument concludes more strongly for the payment of this Duty to him than them. *For they*, as the Apostle urgeth it further, *for a few days chastneth us after their pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be made partakers of his Holiness.*

Certainly, if the Law of Nature, as dark as it was, yet afforded Light enough to teach us in our Youth, when we were not arrived at the due Exercise of Reason, to love, if as weak as it was, it had power enough to constrain us to revere our Parents according to the Flesh, though they corrected us, and their Corrections many times proceeded from a froward and ill Humour; from a Capricio and Whimsie taking them

them in the Crown; tho the Infliction of them was not conducted by Prudence, or moderated by Clemency, nor deſiged for our Temporal Good, our Reformation; the Law of Grace, the Light of the Goſpel muſt at leaſt be as efficacious, (not to ſay more, which I might juſtly) if we do not wilfully oppoſe the one, or obſcure the other, eſpecially when our Age hath ripened our Judgment to diſcern Conſequences, to reſtrain or quell all Inſurrections of boyſterous Paſſions, and keep us in quiet ſubjection to the Father of our Spirits, when guided by his own Infinite Goodneſs and Wiſdom, he exerciſeth his Paternal Authority in correcting us; and doth this leſs than our Merits require, and always having an Eye in it to our Advantage, our Spiritual and Eternal Warfare; yea, farther than keeping us in quiet Subjection, they would have Power enough to oblige us to be thankful to him; that he ſhould vouchſafe to be angry with us, and reprove us, and uſe the Diſcipline of his Rod, when other gentler Methods for our Amendment had failed; that he ſhould condeſcend, after in vain he had ſhew'd us Line upon Line,

Line, and Precept upon Precept, to inſtruct us with his Chaſtiſements; we ſhould eſteem it an Honour and an Happineſs to be taught by him; tho his teaching might be as rough, as that of *Gideons* Judg. 8. 16 was to the wayward Elders of *Succeth*, with *Thorns and Briars*; and conſidering this, to break out with *Job* Job 17. 17, 18. in a Rapture, *What is man? Or what are we, that thou ſhouldſt magnifie us, and ſet thy heart upon us?* And that thou ſhoulſt viſit us every Morning, and try us every Moment? Or pronounce with the greateſt Satisfaction concerning our ſelves? What was *Eliphaz* his Judgment of a man under God's Job 3. 17. Chaſtiſement, *Behold, how happy are we whom God correcteth!*

Were our Thoughts employed in making this Reflection on our Afflictions and Sufferings, that they are the Inſtruments ſubſcribed as it were by God's own hand, certifying his having elected and predeſtinated us to Glory; as that paſſage of our Lord to *Ananias* concerning *Paul* ſtrongly implies, when having acquainted him in a Viſion, that he was a *choſen Veſſel* of his, Acts 19. 15, 16. he preſently ſubjoyns, *For I will ſhew him how great things he muſt ſuffer for my*

my Names ſake; the force of the Reaſon couch'd in it lying thus, either that the Divine Determination was firſt fixt upon obliging him to ſuffer, before it was on glorifying him; or his ſuffering for his Name was a Demonſtrative Proof of his being Elected by him to Glory: That they are the Teſtimonials Signed and Sealed by the holy Spirit of our preſent Adoption; and the Bonds he delivers to us in aſſurance of our future Glorification, according as this place of the Apoſtle imports, *The Spirit witneſſeth with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God; and if Children, then Heirs of God, and joynt Heirs with Chriſt. If we alſo ſuffer with him, that we may be alſo glorified with him together* — That they are the evident Tokens God affords us, to aſſure us of our Salvation. So St. *Paul* calls them, and would have the *Philippians* eſteem them, becauſe it was given them in the behalf of his Name, not only to *believe on him*, but alſo to *ſuffer for his ſake*: That they are the Marks which the good Shepherd and Biſhop of our Souls ſets upon the Sheep of his Flock, thoſe which belong to his Fold; whereof thoſe Sufferings

Rom. 8.

Phil. 28. 9. *Ἔνδειξις σωτηρίας ἀπὸ Θεῦ.

Sufferings which are unto Blood reſemble thoſe Letters in Red-Oaker; the reſt, though never ſo black and gloomy, yet while they are on this ſide Martyrdom, thoſe in Tarr; with which for Cognizance and diſtinction-ſake from others, great Sheep-maſters are wont to brand their own Sheep. So St. *Paul* eſteemed his, when he ſaid, Gal. 6. 17. *I bear about me the marks of the Lord Jeſus:* For by thoſe marks he meant no other than the Scars of the old Wounds he received when he was battered and bruiſed with Stones, than the Prints of the Irons and Chains he had wore in his ſeveral Impriſonments, than the Furrows thoſe Scourges he had felt for preaching in his Name had made, and left behind them in his Fleſh, there would be no neceſſity of preſſing us to carry about thoſe Authentick Teſtimonials, to have thoſe Aſſurances of our Sonſhip and Inheritance to ſhew, to wear theſe honourable Badges of our great Maſter, or the ſame Livery he did on Earth; meer Patience in ſuſtaining them would be too mean and poor a Virtue, we ſhould exult and leap for joy, in having received ſuch ſatisfactory Teſtimonies of our being

favoured

favoured of God, such undeniable and inconteſtable Proofs and Characters of being his Children.

Our Saviour enjoyned this Deportment to his Diſciples when they ſhould be perſecuted for his Cauſe, and Men upon that account ſhould revile them, and ſeparate them from their Company, ſhould reproach and caſt out their Names as Evil for his ſake, ----*Rejoyce and leap for joy in that day; for great is your Reward in Heaven.* And his Apoſtle St. *James* encourageth us by his Exhortation to the ſame, ----*My Brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers Temptations*: And by the Reaſon he ſubjoyns, the Beatitude of ſuch a ſtate, provided it be antecedently ſupported with Patience; for otherwiſe they are no diſtinctive Cognizance; nay, they ſerve only to procure our preſent Miſery, and to charge us with miſery hereafter. *Bleſſed is that man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he ſhall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promiſed to them that love him.*

Luke 6. 22, 23.

1 Jam. 3.

4 12.

So doth St. *Peter*; Foraſmuch as by ſuffering for Chriſt, we have not only a fellowſhip in his Sufferings,(ſuffer with

but are honoured to ſuffer what he did; and while we do ſo, the ſame Spirit of God and of Glory reſteth upon us which did on him, whom God glorified amidſt his Sufferings by the Darkneſs which overſpread the Heavens, and the Convulſions that ſhook the Earth, by opening the Graves, and renting the Veil of the Temple; Proofs which convinced the Centurion he was the Son of God: And beſides all this, when his Glory ſhall be revealed, we ſhall appear in the ſame Glory, and our Joy then ſhall be full; the confident hope of all which to come to us in Reverſion, is enough to highten and encreaſe our preſent Joy.

1 Pet. 4. 13, 14. *Therefore rejoyce, inaſmuch as ye are partakers of Chriſt's Sufferings; that when his Glory ſhall be revealed, ye may be alſo glad with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the Name of Chriſt, happy are ye; for the Spirit of Glory and of God reſteth upon you.* The Apoſtles, filled with ſuch Conſiderations as theſe, acted according to thoſe Rules, they gave for the behaviour of all other Chriſtians. After being beaten by an Order of the Council for preaching Jeſus, they departed from their Preſence,

ſence, *rejoycing that they were counted worthy to ſuffer for his names ſake.* This was their conſtant Frame of Spirit, while their outward appearance was quite contrary, --- *as Sorrowful; but always rejoycing.* Acts 5.41.

St. *Paul* did not only *rejoyce* upon the proſpect of the Reward, in the *hope of the glory of God*, *but gloried* (which is a Proceeding farther) *in Tribulations*; becauſe by a train of conſequences they wrought an aſſurance that the love of God was ſhed abroad in his Heart by the Holy Ghoſt. He entertained and recreated his Mind with theſe. *He took pleaſure in Infirmities, in Reproaches, in Neceſſities, in Perſecutions, in Diſtreſſes for Chriſt's ſake.* 2 Cor. 12. 10.

2 Cor. 6. 10

Rom. 5. 23, 24, 25

The Jews converted to Chriſtianity had learnt theſe Inſtructions ſo well, and followed their Example ſo cloſe, that they *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their Goods.* And St. *Paul* prayed, that his *Coloſſians* might reach this degree of Perfection, as to *joyn Joy with their Patience*, that they might be *ſtrengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-ſuffering with joyfulneſs.* Heb. 10. 34. Col. 1. 11.

And thoſe in the ſucceeding Ages of the Church came near this Point, who could thankfully adore God in their Tribulations, (for none can give Thanks for that which is grievous as ſuch, and affords no occaſion for Pleaſure or rejoycing on any account) and they who did ſo, made it appear by ſuch Conſiderations as the forementioned, that they were Signs and Proofs of God's Favour and Affection.

S. *Chryſoſt. ep* 11. *ad Olymp.*

So St. *Chryſoſtome* proteſted he would never ceaſe aſcribing Glory to God for all Events and Incidents, and in that Proteſtation particularly reſpected his Deprivation and Baniſhment. *Philagrius* practiſed this, rendring Thanks to God for his Sickneſs, and the Benefit he received by it, though the firſt was involuntary and againſt his Will. And ſo did St. *Hierom*, that God counted him worthy to be hated of the World. For though only ſuch Tribulations which are ſuſtained for the Cauſe of God, are the primary marks of his Favour; yet the ſuffering any Injuſtice, while it's endured with a generous and brave Courage, and Thanks are returned to him, by whoſe ſole permiſſion the

S. *Hierom. ep. ad Aſellam.*

the Injury could be done, is a Secondary mark, and the Person thus suffering in God's Esteem and Acceptance, is scarce a less Confessor and Martyr, than one who suffers upon his account. Such a one *Job* was in his extreme Poverty, to which he was reduced by the Plunder of the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, and a Fire from Heaven, and in his Solitary Condition, when a Wind from the Wilderness bereft him of his Children; while he magnified God for bringing this want and deprivation upon him, *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord.*

(5.) We are to support our selves with this Confidence, for which God gives us ground every where in his Word, that in a Season which is meet and proper for him to appear in, and the most convenient for us to receive Relief, will either abate our Troubles, mitigate our Sorrow, and so ease us this way, or put a Period to our Afflictions once for all, by delivering us out of them.

S. 7. § 5. God in a convenient season will lessen our Troubles, and so ease us, or deliver us out of them.

Are

Are we in Dangers? Then we ought to exercise as Generous and Noble a Confidence, that either he will deliver us out of them, or preserve us amidst them, as *Job did*; *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* Or as the Psalmist did, *The Lord is my light and salvation, whom then shall I fear?* Or as he elsewhere, *In God have I put my trust, I will not fear Flesh, I will not fear what man can do unto me.* Are we poor? We ought to rely on him for Relief and Sustenance; that having such a Shepherd we shall lack nothing; that according to his Promise, *He will never leave nor forsake us*; which is that the Apostle arms us with against Covetousness.

Job 13. 11
Psal. 27. 1.
Psal. 56. 4.
Psal. 2. 31.
Heb. 13. 5.

While we are afflicted by him, we should have this Assurance, that when Afflictions have had that end for which God appointed them, he will put an end to them: As the Courage of a gallant Man encreases as Difficulties grow upon him, so ought our Trust in God; and so it will, if we are Believers indeed, rise in degree, as his Corrections are multiplied upon us.

When

When we are assaulted with Temptations, we ought to rely upon his Providence which is engaged, That no Temptation shall happen to us but what is ordinary, and so requires but an ordinary Force to oppose it; nothing but what is common to Men shall befal us; and upon the Fidelity of his Word, which he hath passed, that he will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength, above what we are able; and moreover, that he will with the Temptation make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it; that his Grace, as he told St. *Paul* when he besought him thrice, that he would remove the Messenger of Satan which buffeted him, take out the Thorn in his Flesh, will be sufficient for us. 2 Cor. 12. 8 1 Cor. 10. 13.

When we have reason to believe that God is angry with us, by laying Trouble upon our Loyns, we are to hope, that he will neither suffer his whole Displeasure, his whole Tempest to arise, nor all his Waves to go over our Heads; nor yet be angry with us for ever, suffer his Wrath to burn like Fire for evermore: That the All-merciful will attemperate his Judgments with Mercy, the All-mindful will not

forget to be gracious, nor shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure; the Omnipotent will not absent himself for ever by with-holding the Light of his Countenance, or withdrawing his gracious Influences.

Under Sorrow and Dejection of Spirit we ought to rely waiting on him, that his Indignation will soon be overpassed; that if he hath forsaken us for a Moment, (it is no more, however our Computation may extend it into a farther length) he will return, and with great Mercies gather us.

Isa. 26.20.

We ought to expostulate with our Souls, as the Psalmist did with his, *Why art thou so cast down, O my Soul; and why art thou so disquieted within me?* And then raise them by hope that we shall have occasion, and resolve with the same Confidence as he did to magnifie him. 'Hope thou in 'God; for I shall yet praise him, who 'is the Health of my Countenance and 'my God. This is what St. *Hierom* writing to *Eustochium* prescribed her for the checking of her Sorrow or Heaviness to argue and debate the case with her self in his words, *why art thou so bad?*

Psal. 42.11

S. *Hierom. Ep.* 22. *ad Eustochium*

The Jewish Church had experience of

of his ſoon turning away his Anger, and thereupon changing her Note, her Lamentation into Thankſgiving, or a Reſolution of doing ſo. *I will praiſe thee, though thou waſt angry with me. Thine anger is turned away, and thou comforteſt me.*

Rely on him we ought, that though he hath ſmitten and made us ſore, he will bind us up, and pour Wine and Oyl into our Wounds; that he will bind them up, and heal us if we are broken-hearted; will turn our Mourning into Joy, and comfort us; ſatiate our weary, and repleniſh our ſorrowful Souls; give Beauty for Aſhes, and the Oyl of Joy for Mourning; the Garment of Praiſe for the Spirit of Heavineſs. Iſa. 30. 6. Pſal. 147. 3 Jer 31. 13. & 24. Iſa. 61. 3. Pſal. 23. 3.

For if we have not ſuch a Perſwaſion, ſuch a Faith, or ſuch a Hope, that God will put an iſſue to our Trouble, we ſhall turn querulous and murmur againſt him as an auſtere Maſter, or a rigorous Judge, and modeſtly expoſtulate, as *Job* did with him, *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? And wilt thou purſue the dry Stubble? For thou writeſt bitter things againſt me, and makeſt me to poſſeſs the Iniquities of my youth: thou* Job 13. 25, 26.

Thou putteſt my feet in the Stocks, &c. and in deſpair, that he will make no end of puniſhing, we ſhall turn Malecontents, and quarrel againſt his Mercy and his Juſtice, and ſawcily demand, How it can ſtand with the one thus to vex and torment the Workmanſhip of his Hands, the People he hath made? Or how it is conſiſtent with the other to be doing this inceſſantly, to be always uſing his Flaming two-edged Sword, and ſhooting abroad his ſharp pointed Arrows againſt Offenders for ſlight, tranſient, and almoſt momentary Tranſgreſſions of his Law?

We ſhall pertly and peremptorily argue and debate the Caſe with him, Why didſt thou frame us Bodies raiſed out of the Duſt of the Ground, where they lay as unconcerned with Trouble, and as inſenſible of Pain as they ſhall be when laid to ſleep on thoſe Beds of Duſt again? Why didſt thou breath into theſe Bodies the Breath of Life, quicken them with a living Soul?

Was it, that thou mighteſt put us into a capacity of feeling and enduring all thou ſhouldſt think fit to moleſt and vex us with? But if upon wanting ſuch a Proſpect, we break not out into

to ſuch boyſterous Paſſions, we immediately deſpond and ſink.

The Pſalmiſt confeſſeth, that he ſhould utterly have fainted, had he not been ſupported with the Expectation of ſeeing the *goodneſs of the Lord in the land of the living*; been quite deſpirited, had not the hope of taſting how good and gracious the Lord is to thoſe who put their Truſt in him, (either by rewarding their Confidence and Patience here on Earth, which we by a perverted Figure call the *Land of the Living*, when it is the Vale, the Hoſpital of Dying Perſons; or in Heaven above, which is properly the Region and Country of the Living) been his ſtrong Cordial and Preſervative. This was the Butteress which ſtay'd up the Apoſtle's Minds, that they were not caſt down there, even while they were caſt down by the external Force and Violence of their Enemies Malice, that *while troubled they were not diſtreſſed, while perplexed they were not in deſpair.* Pſal. 27. 13. 2 Cor. 4. 8.

They who had not, knew what it was to truſt in God, becauſe they hardly believed ſuch a Being, yet have thought Hope to be an effectual Remedy v. *Cic.* 2. *Tuſcul.*

Remedy for the aſſwaging of Grief or Pain, and therefore have ordered it; the whole *Epicurean* School have done ſo: For beſides the Avocation of the Mind from the preſent grievous Objects, which is impoſſible, they require Revocation; which was not, as they explained it, a bare calling to Memory paſſed Pleaſures, but a looking for good things for the future.

S. 7. § 6. Weigh we ſhould the Advantagei gained by Patience in order to another Life.

(6.) We ſhould weigh the important Advantages we ſhall reap by Patience, which if conſider'd, would not be more an Argument to convince us of the reaſonableneſs of this Duty, than of great Force to incline us to the Exerciſe of it, and of mighty uſe to aſſert us therein. I will not mention the advantages it hath to this Life, thoſe having been repreſented in the Fourth Argument, where ſuch who will make their recourſe thither may find ſufficient matter for their Meditations on that Subject, but will only ſet before you thoſe which concern another.

And ſince the Evils which adminiſter an occaſion for the Trial of our Patience may be regarded as they are done us by Men, and they are the immediate

mediate Authors of them, or as they are permitted by God, they being but his Instruments, or as they are inflicted by him immediately. I will begin with reckoning the Advantages Patience will yield us at the last, if we look upon our Ills as done us by Men, such as are the Injuries and Oppressions of the lawless and violent.

N. 1. The Advantages first of bearing the ills which are done us by Men.

(1.) If we are buffeted by them, and endure grief, suffering wrongfully for Conscience towards God, and take all this patiently, the Apostle St. *Peter* acquaints us, *it is thank-worthy, and acceptable towards God; i. e.* if we are causelesly and without any Merit on our part misused by them, (tho indeed no Provocation can be sufficient to justifie the doing of an Injury) but especially if the occasion of all our hard Treatment be the conscientious discharging of our Duty towards God, and suffering those things, which by their Smart cause pain to the Body, or by their Indignity afflict the Mind, and we behave our selves quietly and decently, submitting our selves, and commending our Cause to him who judgeth righteously: Such a Carriage, tho' it be but our Duty, is esteemed by him

1 Pet. 2. 19, 20. Κολαφιζόμενοι τὸ χάρις. God will avenge us upon them

him as a Free-will Offering; he accepts it kindly now, and will return it with large Thanks hereafter.

When we are injured, and bear our ill Treatment patiently, out of Conſcience towards God requiring this Behaviour, we are his Confeſſors, though the ground of our Suffering be not Religion; and he is pleaſed to look upon it as an Engagement laid upon him, ſo as to acknowledge himſelf our Debtor.

I ſay, with reſpect to this he condeſcends to own himſelf our Debtor, while in truth we are his by reaſon of our ſins; as one obliged to cancel thoſe Bonds, by which as by Bonds Signed, and Sealed, and delivered, we rendred our ſelves obnoxious to the payment of the utmoſt Farthing, to ſuffer the extream Puniſhment due to them, and to diſcharge us from the Penalty of them, *i. e.* entirely to pardon them; and not only ſo, but to make us ſatisfaction, (I do not mean here the ſatisfaction of recompenſing us for the Injuries we have ſuſtained, but in reckoning ſeverely with the injurious.) He hath engaged to repay home in Vengeance unto thoſe from whom we have

have unjuſtly ſuffer'd. He hath ſaid, *He will avenge the Blood of his Servants, and render Vengeance to his Adverſaries.* Deut. 32. 43.

And I hope this is not an improper Conſideration to urge us to the Practice of Patience, or to facilitate the Exerciſe of a Virtue, with which Meekneſs is inſeparably joyn'd, ſince the Apoſtle hath alledged it for a Motive to quiet and allay our Spirits, while the ſenſe of the Wrongs and the ill uſage we ſuffer might ſtir them up, and incenſe us to retaliate upon the Authors of our Grievances.

Dearly beloved, avenge not your ſelves, but rather give place unto wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay it, ſaith the Lord. The more then we ſuffer for doing well, while we take it patiently, the more unreaſonably we are buffeted while we behave our ſelves with Tranquility, the more numerous ſhall the Stripes be, the more ponderous the Blows with which the Lord, the Avenger of his Servants, (or of his own Cauſe indeed) ſhall adjudge the lawleſs and violent Men, who oppreſs us now, to be beaten at the laſt. Rom. 12. 19.

O with what a measure of Patience is this one single Reflexion, sufficient to endue us with, that by it bearing the Injuries of the unjust, the Insults of the Insolent, we make him our Debtor, who is so just and solvent, that he will continue in no Man's Debt, but will pay what he owes upon a gratuitous Promise with munificent Benefaction; or instead of being otherwise benificent, makes himself our exceeding great Reward!

O how is this single Consideration, that if we leave our innocent oppressed Cause in his Hands, without proceeding to vindicate our selves by returning Evil for Evil, he will take it into Consideration, and do us right upon our potent Enemies, able to extinguish all sparks of Revenge, and to check and stifle all desires after it, or even prevent the rising of any such Thoughts as may meditate upon making such an Attempt!

Will not this well ponder'd be enough to make the warmest, or those who are the quickest to resent an Injury, or the promptest to return it, wait quietly, God's good time for the doing his own Work, *i. e.* The executing Vengeance

Vengeance upon thoſe who do them wrong, without taking it out of his hands by a precipitate carving out of Juſtice to themſelves, ſince their Adverſaries, if they will permit God to be the Judge between them, will be ſure to ſuffer from him infinitely more in degree and duration, than they with all their heat and rage of Revenge could poſſibly inflict on them?

Common Experience teacheth us, that Princes and Maſters of Families are not well-pleaſed, that their Subjects or Servants ſhould be their own Juſticiaries, do themſelves right upon their Fellow-Subjects or Servants, (ſo they falſly call their taking Revenge of them:) Nay, they oft puniſh their forward Inſolence in this, while they are ready on the other hand to give them ample Satisfaction for Abuſes or Wrongs done them, if with reſpect to their Commands and Pleaſure they put them up in ſilence and quietneſs, without making or endeavouring a return, and are content to refer the Eſtimate and Reparation of them to their Judgment and Sentence. In like manner our Heavenly King and ſupreme Maſter takes it better and kinder at the *Tertul. de Pat. c. 10. 165.*

O hands,

hands of us his Subjects and Servants, that we ſhould ſo deport our ſelves in his great Kingdom and Family the World, ſubmit the Injuries we may receive from others to his Taxation and Compenſation of them. And depend we may upon the Security of his Word and Juſtice, that if we decline the taking Vengeance our ſelves out of reſpect to him, whoſe peculiar and unalienable Prerogative Vengeance is, and devolve the Cognizance of them to his Judicature, That the righteous Judge will decree us a Satisfaction for our Dammages, far exceeding that we could take, adjudge us Reparations not only above them, but above what we can ask or think; *i.e.* above all compariſon, ſince there is nothing that is pleaſing but we have the confidence to ask; and not any one thing ſimply poſſible, but we have Faculties to conceive or imagine it.

Conſidering this, O my Soul, why ſhouldſt thou be caſt down? Or why ſhouldſt thou be ſo diſquieted within me, upon every imaginary Neglect, ſuppoſed Affront, miſconſtrued Word, or ill-interpreted Carriage of thy Neighbour? Why ſhouldſt thou hereupon ſwell

ſwell with Indignation againſt him, and project, as far as the Storm of thy Anger will permit thee to think or invent, how thou mayſt be upon *even terms*, and quit Scores with him?

But why ſhouldſt thou do this, if the Injury and Miſchief was real; if there was the oppreſſion of the Enemy in the caſe? Will not the meditation that this, unleſs repented of, will fall upon his own head; and that God will make thee the largeſt Retribution thou canſt imagine or wiſh for, if thou art not overcome of Evil, calm thy boyſterous Paſſions of Anger and Revenge, and make thee bear even the greateſt Outrages, without ſtudying a requital thy ſelf, or deſiring any other than that which he will make thee?

Will not this Thought, *That the ungodly and the ſinner, who ſet themſelves againſt thee ſhall appear in Judgment for this*, where they ſhall not be able to ſtand, have power enough to prevail with thee, to commend thy Soul while thou ſuffereſt ill and doeſt well, to the keeping of God as a faithful Creator. 1 Pet. 4.

Tertul. de Anim. c. 4. *Socrates* upheld himſelf with Patience upon this Conſideration, meerly that he ſuffered unjuſtly: For when his Wife bewailed his Condemnation as illegal, he replyed, congratulating himſelf that it was ſo, *And what, would you have had me juſtly Sentenced?*

But may be this will be reckon'd but a ſmall Advantage, or ſcarce any at all, that the Righteous Judge ſhall vindicate our oppreſſed Innocency, and puniſh our injurious Adverſary; and yet this is of Conſolation to us in many caſes under filthy and reproachful Language, or contumelious Uſage, that we can take a courſewith the Authors of theſe, and that that Court of Juſtice will give us at leaſt this amends, that it will puniſh them; and may be an Inducement to make us put them up quietly; on the conſideration of ſuch a Satisfaction, if there was no other, (traduced as the meditation of Revenge) only deferred to another World.

S. 7. § 6. N. 2. He will amply reward us. And therefore I am to acquaint you in the Second place, that there are ample poſitive Advantages behind, that beſides the calling our Oppreſſors and Perſecutors to an account, and the ſevere puniſhing them, he will make us ample

ample Satisfaction, and largely recompenſe us for our Sufferings. He who condeſcends to make himſelf our Debtor, will not be barely juſt, and make a ſimple Reſtitution of what we laid down on his account, or commended to his Truſt, our Name, our Goods, our Health, our Lives; (reſtore our good Name, make up our Loſſes, cure our Diſeaſes, raiſe up our Lives,) but will prove our bountiful Benefactor; and as he is immenſely rich, make us a ſuperabundant Remuneration for them.

He will make us a thouſand-fold Retribution for Houſes and Lands, Brethren or Kindred parted with for his Names ſake; or if we take the being ſpoiled of theſe, though on another account, patiently and ſubmiſſively, out of reſpect to the Will of God, whoſe pleaſure it is it ſhould be ſo, and Obedience to his Command enjoyning us this Demeanour; he will reſtore us a hundred-fold, either more than the Principal, by way of Uſe, or elſe a hundred-fold more in worth and value than the Principal; and that in this Life, in giving us the Bleſſings of inward Peace, and Comfort, and Joy;

and a hundred times more than a hundred-fold in another Life, by giving us the possession of an eternal Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven.

His Son, the same with himself, hath entred into this Engagement; *Every one who hath forsaken Houses, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father or Mother,* Mat. 19. 21 *or Wife or Children, or Lands for my Names sake, shall receive a hundred-fold, and inherit everlasting Life*, which is much more than a hundred-fold Retribution; or the hundred-fold Retribution is infinitely multiplied beyond it self, by being made everlasting.

The Tribulations of this World, if with patience we pass through them, shall bring us at last to the Kingdom of Acts 14. God, under whom we shall be invested in the chief Dignities of that place. The Vale of Tears to a Religion of ever-flowing Joys; and the Vale of the Shadow of Death, to the everlasting Hills. The being *tried*, and *enduring the Trial*; yea, the enduring that but a small time, expressed in that Epistle, Rev. 2. 10. that St. *John* was commanded to write to the Angel of the Church of *Smyrna*, by no longer a Period than Ten days only

only, ſhall be recompenſed with a Crown of Life.

Reigning with our Maſter, as is the Phraſe of one Promiſe; *Being glorified with him*, as is that of another, *ſhall be the reward of our ſuffering with and for him*; *i. e.* Joyning the Emphaſis of both together, our Condition ſhall be as great as Sovereignty, and as happy as Glory can render it. Priſons ſhall be exchanged for Thrones, the darkneſs of Dungeons for Light too pure to be beheld by mortal Eye; and *Death ſhall purchaſe Immortality.*

2 Tim. 3. 12.

Rom. 8 17

If we have been Sacrificed to publick Hatred for the cauſe of Chriſt, or offered up on the Service of his Faith, we ſhall be Prieſts to miniſter before the moſt High God in the Temple above. If we bear our Maſters Croſs on our Shoulders now, we ſhall *triumph* with him above, and attending his Triumph, carry *Palms in our Hands.* If we have had a dark Night of Calamity here, though it were ſhort as that thoſe Countries have, which lie between the 60*th* and 70*th* Degree of Northern Latitude, we ſhall for it enjoy an endleſs day in beholding the Light of God's immutable Glory.

Rev. 4 6.

If we have met with frequent occasions of Sorrow and Grief, which yet when they come thickest, are generally but alternative; *That the Waters have gone over our Heads, and even entred into our Souls*; all our Faculties shall be immerst in, and swallowed up of uninterrupted Joys hereafter.

And as these shall be the Rewards of our suffering patiently, (Rewards passing all Uuderstanding to comprehend, while by the Condescention of the Divine Spirit to comport with the Weakness of our Faculties, they are shadowed out by Kingdoms, Regality, Crowns, Triumph, Priesthood, Light, Joy which shall be conferred upon us with respect to our Sufferings) so were all the Sufferings of this present Life united in a Combination to fall upon us at one time, they would hold no comparison with them. *For I reckon*, saith S. *Paul*, *that the Sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.* Upon computing and calculating them both, I find this Inequality, That if all the Miseries of this could be melted down into one Lump, they would bear no more proportion with the happiness

Rom. 8 18. λογίζομαι.

happineſs of that, than a ſingle Gravel-ſtone doth with all the Sand of the Sea-ſhore, or the drop of a Bucket with the Ocean, or the Duſt of a Balance with the whole Earth, becauſe ſtill thoſe Miſeries would be but Temporary, at the utmoſt no longer than our Lives, which they would ſhorten too, if not immediately deſtroy; while the Happineſs is eternal: They could not be drawn down to ſuch a Quinteſſence as not to have ſome Temperament, while the Happineſs ſhall have no Abatement.

And yet as incapable as they are of a Compariſon by the Lightneſs of thoſe, and ſolidneſs of this, the Mixture of thoſe and the Purity of this, the ſhortneſs, even momentarineſs of thoſe, and the eternal duration of this; *Theſe light afflictions which are but for a moment, ſhall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory.* 2 Cor. 5. Or as it is more emphatically expreſs'd in the Original Text, by the Singular Number and Preſent Tenſe, *This light Affliction worketh for us all this.* Mark well the difference; its a ſingle Affliction only, and that ſingle one a light one, and that light one

one but for a moment, a transient moment, gone even while its named, or as soon; but it's a weight, an eternal weight, an exceeding eternal weight, a far more exceeding eternal weight of Glory; such a far more exceeding eternal Weight, that *Tertullians* eternal weight of Glory *from Supergression to Snpergression*, St. *Hierom's* eternal weight of Glory *above measure in Sublimeness* are too low and dwarfish Expressions to reach the Heighth of Emphasis, which the words in the Original Language have, the Hyperboles added to Hyperboles, are too diminutive Figures to set forth its greatness.

C. 40. de resurrect. p. 408.

Vers. Hierom.

And now did we in all our Sufferings with a fast and stedfast Eye of Faith, look constantly forward towards this Weight of Glory which shall be revealed and laid upon us: Did we with this in all our Afflictions look upwards toward the Reward which is laid up for us in the Heavens, and that we shall receive and contemplate them; such a Belief and Consideration, as it would convince us we ought, so it would enable us according to our Duty to support them with Patience, when such a Carriage

riage ſhould meet at laſt with ſo immenſe a recompenſe.

A falſe Opinion, or an Ambition to be had in reputation for a conſtancy in adhering to an erroneous Principle once entertained, hath made Men inſenſible, or what's near the ſame, regardleſs of Pain. *Anaxarchus* in *Nicocreon*'s Mortar felt or complained of no Pain, but urged his Tormentors to pound on, becauſe it lighted not upon *Anaxarchus*, but on his Caſe or Husk.

Poſſidonius, a Noble Philoſopher of *Rhodes*, would not ſuffer a Viſit which the Great *Pompey*, returning from his *Syrian* Expedition, made him, with an expectation of hearing him diſcourſe of ſome Point of Philoſophy, to be fruſtrated by a ſharp Diſtemper he then laboured under; for when expreſſing his Concern, that the Pain he was afflicted with would not permit him to gratifie him with this Pleaſure, this great Captain would have taken his leave of him: *Yes*, replied that Philoſopher, *but you may have that Satisfaction; for I will never give ſuch way to my Pain, as it ſhall render the Honour of your Viſit vain.* *Cic. Tuſc. 3.*

and

and defeat its Deſign. Whereupon tormented as he lay upon his Sick bed, he diſcourſed upon the great Theme of the Stoicks, *That Nothing was good but what was Honeſt*; and tho' twinged ever and anon as he was by an acute Fit of the Gout, he perſevered in his Opinion, and purſued his matter, interrupting it only upon thoſe Returns with this Apoſtrophe, *Pain! thou canſt do nothing at all; not all the light Matches thou ſetſt to my Joynts, not all thy racking and torturing ſhall extort from me this Confeſſion, that thou art an Evil.*

Now if ſuch an Opinion concerning Pain either mitigated it, or was able to raiſe his Mind above the ſence of it; if a Wiſe Man in *Epicurus* his Opinion might by the help of Philoſophy be able to ſay, even in *Perillus* his Golden Bull, *How ſweet is this! How it nothing concerns me!* Certainly the having a firm Belief that Heaven and its Joys ſhall be the Reward of all the Affliction we endure with Patience here, and the having our Contemplation fixt upon this, will either abate a great deal of the Troubles we ſhall meet on our way thither, or aſſiſt us to endure

dure them; and to perform the Journey throughout, notwithſtanding all the Fateigues of it.

If *Empedocles* had the Courage (whether true or falſe it matters not) to leap into glowing *Ætna*, *Peregrinus* to throw himſelf into the Flames, *Mucius Scævola* to thruſt his erring hand into the Fire, and the Patience to hold it till it ſhould have been burnt off for the puniſhment of its Miſtake. If *Anaxarchus* could ſuffer the being pounded and bruiſed in a Mortar. If *Regulus* had the Patience to endure the nailed Barrel, and the Youths of *Lacedemon* the ſcourging at the Altar: And this their Reſolution was inſpired, this their Patience upheld by a Thirſt after Glory, and a Conceit that it was to be purchaſed at the rate of ſuch Actings and Sufferings; ſurely the hopes of the Glory of Heaven; nay, the aſſurance its to be had upon the Terms of doing well and ſuffering ill unto the end, will make as behave our ſelves as equally brave, ſhow us much Fortitude, and Conſtancy and Patience to gain them.

Cic. Tuſcul. 1.

Tertul. c. 5. *ad Mort.*

If

Tert. c. 5. ad Mart. 158. *Rigal.* If it was accounted worth the acquiring the Glass, the Pebble of vain and false Glory at so dear a rate as the parting with Life, or sustaining the Miseries of it amounted to; certainly the going as far, the paying down or suffering as much to gain the Jewel of true and solid Glory must needs countervail the Pains, the Cost and Charges.

If the Husbandman, after he hath with much Toyl prepared the Earth, waiteth with much Patience for the early and later Rain to impregnate the Seed he hath committed to it, and with farther Patience to receive the precious Fruit it will produce; certainly we may with a Patience like theirs at least, after all our labour and pains endured, after we have sown in abundance of Tears, patiently expect till the Harvest of Glory be ripe for our reaping; *i. e.* as St. *James* from their Examples draws the reasonableness of this Duty, and then forceth his Exhortation to it, *We ought to be patient till the coming of the Lord, and establish our Hearts, for his coming draweth nigh.* Jam. 5. 7.

Who

Who is there on a Journey, who would not be content to travel o'er a little ill way, if he pondered with himſelf, that at the end of it, and that not very remote, or at ſome great diſtance, there lay a place, the tranſcendent Deliciouſneſs of which would abundantly requite for the Illneſs of the Road, and the inconſiderable Trouble the going over it would cauſe.

Where is the Man ſo fond of Eaſe, who would not willingly endure the Calenture of a Fever, all the Needles the moſt ſharp-pointed ſtone can run into the tendereſt and moſt ſenſible Parts, all the lighted Torches the Gout can apply to his Joynts, the extreameſt Pain that any other the moſt ſharp and cruel Diſeaſes can cauſe for ſome few Minutes, if he could make his Compoſition upon theſe Terms, that thoſe moments of Torment being expired, he ſhould ever after enjoy an eaſie eſtabliſhed Health, a firm and laſting Peace of good Habitude of Body, ſecure from the Hoſtile Incurſions of Diſeaſes for the future?

Or where is the Perſon ſo addicted to the Pleaſures of his Palat, that would not take the bittereſt Potion art can prepare,

prepare, could he be morally aſſured, that his Taſte never after ſhould be diſaffected with a diſagreeable thing? But ſuch, as are theſe Caſes, is that of our preſent Life with relation to a future, and ſuch are our Circumſtances. Act therefore as reaſonably in this caſe we ſhould as we do in others, bear all the Inconveniences of the Road here, in conſideration, that having paſſed them over, we ſhall arrive at Heaven, a place which flows with continual Pleaſures, which ſhall laſt one eternal Sabbath, where we ſhall celebrate one high and endleſs Feſtival of Joy, and quench our Thirſt after happineſs in Rivers of it, which are always ſtreaming from the Right Hand of God. Bear all the Pains which diſordered Bodies or jarring Humours may
Deut. 29. 5. now cauſe, upon a firm Perſwaſion that our Bodies hereafter ſhall be no more annoyed by Diſeaſes, nor incommoded by our ſenſual Appetites, nor impaired any more by an Eternal Age, than the
Dan. 3. 27. *Iſraelites* Cloathes and Shoes waxed old for Forty Years together in the Wilderneſs, or the Three Childrens Coats or Hair which were not ſo much

as

as ſinged in *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Furnace, though heated many degrees beyond ordinary. V. *Tertul. c. 58. de Reſurrect.*

For all this Priviledge and Immunity from whatever does Inconvenience our Body is imported in the Promiſe of the Bliſs made by *Iſaiah*, or in the Deſcription of it by St. *John*, in thoſe who are the Poſſeſſors of it. They neither *hunger nor thirſt; nor Heat nor Sun falls on them any more, all tears are wiped from their Eyes*; neither ſeeing any more, than feeling any miſery which may occaſion them; we ſhould therefore chearfully carry about in our Bodies thoſe Marks which the World reckons when it imprints them there, Brands of Diſgrace, in conſideration and firm hope that they ſhall be one day changed into Stars or Rays of Glory; nay, that our whole Bodies ſhall ſhine as the *brightneſs of the Firmament for evermore*; or as the Sun in the Kingdom of our Father; be like the *glorious Body of our Lord*, that is now *ſeated at the right hand of Majeſty in the higheſt Heavens*, whoſe Face on Earth, when but transfigured on the Mount, ſhone like that Luminary in its Meridian Vigour. Iſa. 49. 16. Rev. 7. 16. 21. 4. Dan. 12. 3 Mat. 13. 43 Phil. 3. 21.

The Martyrs and Confessors had this consideration of the happiness of another Life, the Joys of Heaven; they set God before their Eyes as their great Reward, look'd up with an Eye of Faith to Jesus, who stood ready to Crown them with the Glory that he himself had; and this made them rather enjoy than suffer those Torments, which were preparatory to infinite and eternal Pleasures and Honours; count their Prisons fair Pallaces, and esteem their Chains as Bracelets and Ornaments, as *Ignatius* did. This made them embrace the Cross, the Gibbet, the Scaffold with as much Chearfulness as dear and cordial Friends do one another after a long Absence, looking upon them as so many several Ascents towards Thrones, and those in their native Country from whence they came, as Stairs by which they were to go up to the Gates of the Heavenly Palace, and have admission there; this made them hasten to their Execution with as much speed as ever Conquerors in any Games to receive the Prize they had won; because they look'd upon it as that which put them into an immediate Capacity of obtaining a Crown of Glory. Thus

St.

St. *Cyprian* with ſuch a quickneſs cloſed his own Eyes, in order to receive the Fatal Stroke, as ſeem'd to chide the Executioners ſlow delay: So *Moſes* and *Maximus* look'd upon their Execution being delayed as a ſort of Cruelty. *Ignatius* preſſed for the Beaſts to which he was condemned; *Suffer me*, ſaid he, *to be made meat for them.* This made them thank their Perſecutors denouncing or inflicting capital Puniſhments on them, becauſe they afforded them a ready and ſafe paſſage before the Sovereign Judge of the World, and that perſon their tender Father as well as a righteous and gracious Judge. In St. *Cyprian's* Phraſe, Gave them an admiſſion to the kiſſing and embracing their Father, as he calls the beholding him. Thus, and for theſe Reaſons *Lucius* thanked *Urbicus* his Judge for the favour of condemning him. And *Roman* Emperors, and their Lieutenants of Provinces, obſerving how forward the Chriſtians were to ſeek for Martyrdom, with what Addreſs they courted it, and with what pleaſure they ſuffer'd it, held themſelves neceſſitated to forbid by Edicts the executing them.

Juſtin. Apol. 1. p. 43 de Lucio.

This made that Sex we usually disparage as tender and fearful, to go upon the most sharp and certain Death, with as much delight as ever the most gay and effeminate of them did to Masks, or Balls, or Plays.

This made the ancient Champions of Christianity to find as much pleasure amidst the Smoak and Flame of their Fiery Ordeals, as ever the most voluptuous in taking the perfumed Air amidst Groves of Jasmin and Myrtle, or that which was embalmed by Winds blowing off from the Spicy Coast.

Because they believed their Souls should be carried up in those Chariots of Fire, and enter Heaven in Triumph, as *Elijah* was taken up in one, and Body and all ascended thither. St. *Cyprian* saith, The Flames of the Furnace into which the 3 *Jewish* Martyrs were cast, (for so they were in resolution of mind) were Refreshments to them. (The Word he useth in Ecclesiastical Writers, denotes the place and Joys of Souls in Bliss; in Profane, the cooling which persons in hot Countries and Seasons found by retreating to Grotto's.)

Epist. 6. Edit. Oxon.

Refrigerium.

From

From this Conſideration they were as much recreated amidſt Chaldrons of melted Lead, (I think I cannot call it *ſcalding* without a Soleciſm and Contradiction, as ever Sun-burnt Travellers were by waſhing off the Sweat and Duſt from their Limbs in ſome clear Chryſtalline Brook; or even in Ice and Snow, as the Forty Martyrs of *Sebaſte*, as ever frozen Traveller did by ſuppling his Limbs in a warm Bath) becauſe they were forthwith to bath in Rivers of pleaſure for evermore. Hence the Rack and Wheel on which they were extended and broken was made ſoft to them as the Down of Swans, becauſe they knew that expiring on them, they ſhould enjoy a Reſt in thoſe quiet Regions above, whoſe perpetuity ſhould never be interrupted nor perfection diſcompoſed: The painfulleſt Martyrdom was undergone with as much pleaſure as ever voluptuous perſon drank of a Bowl temper'd the moſt agreeable to his Palat, becauſe they eſteemed it the *Cup of Salvation.* This Reflexion made the Primitive Chriſtians offer themſelves to their Tormentors, and as fearful they ſhould not obtain the

v. S. Baſil. Orat. in 40 Martyr.

Heavenly Crown, without receiving that of Martyrs first, proclaim themselves Christians.

So *Nicephorus* is recorded to have done, and by such a Challenge as it were, provoked the Magistrate to put him to Death, that so by his Blood thus generously shed, he might wash out the Infamy which the Cowardice of *Sapritius* in recanting the Faith, might otherwise have left upon the Christian Name: Though this voluntary offering of themselves without any Inquisition, or previous to any Apprehension was forbid. They wish'd for Wild Beasts, as if to be devoured by them for the sake of Christ was the Fruition of a Pleasure. So *Ignatius* did, and so he called it; *They drew them to them*, as if they were not fierce enough to assail them, so *Germanus* did, when the Proconsul advised him to consider he was in the Flower of his Age, and to have so kind a regard to his Life, as to save it. They defied their Enemies Menaces of Torments, and stoutly replyed, *They were ready to entertain them.*

But what do I ſpeak of the power of this Faith or Hope in Chriſtians to make them thus to endure, or thus to meet their Sufferings. The very *Jews*, whoſe hope of a future Reſurrection was not ſo firm, becauſe their Revelation of it was not ſo clear, did not only not accept deliverance from Tortures, expecting a better Reſurrection, but underwent ſome of the cruelleſt Fleaing, as if it had been no more than cutting off the Fore-skin.

N. 3. The ſame Conſideration of the Reward will make us bear patiently the Evils which are the common Incidents of Humanity.

And now if the conſideration of the advantageous Recompences which ſhould be beſtowed upon them with intuition of their Suffering made the Martyrs and Confeſſors of old endure Priſons, Torments, Death, with ſuch Courage and Patience as you have heard related. Certainly, if we would admit the ſame Conſideration, and give it leave to make as deep an Impreſſion on our Minds as it did on theirs, it would as equally fortifie us againſt all Sufferings, or ſupport us under them as it did them; eſpecially thoſe which are the common Lot of Mankind, (and not the peculiar Portion of Chriſtians; or theirs becauſe ſtanchly ſuch) and are of God's im-

mediate Commissionating, without employing the Agency, or using the instrumentality of Men to bring them to pass, such as are Diseases and Death.

As first, N. 3. m. 1. Diseases. First I say, Such Considerations would support us under Diseases, which, if they were not engendred by our own Intemperance, (or that did not bring the Fuel, or light the Flame) I rank under those Ills which are of God's immediate Infliction, because, (although he may use the Ministry of Angels in laying this Punishment upon us, as he did in smiting Job 2. *Job*, and filling his Body with Ulcers from the Crown of the Head to the 1 Sam. 18. 10. Sole of his Foot; and *Saul*'s Malady was from an *evil Spirit*; and he gave the Ps. 78. 49, 50. *Egyptians* Life over to the Pestilence, by sending evil Angels among them: And this be the general Opinion of the *Jewish* Doctors Commentary on *Psal.* 91: 46. *That he makes use of them for this purpose.* And the *dumb* Mark 9. 17 *Spirit* in St. *Mark*, which tore the *possessed*, and cast him into the Fire, and into the Water; and the Spirit of In- Luk. 11. 16 firmity in St. *Luke*, which held the Woman Eighteen years, are probable Arguments for the Confirmation of this;

this; yet their Miniſtry in this being inviſible, and we not being able to diſcern their hand, while God ſtrikes by them, no more than his own; we aſcribe all thoſe to him, of which we can aſſign no natural immediate Cauſe. So did *David*, when he prayed, *Remove thy ſtroke away from me. I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand.* Looking then on theſe with the Pſalmiſt, as Divine Chaſtiſements. *When thou with rebukes doſt correct man for Iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a moth. Thou haſt chaſtned or corrected me, but haſt not given me over unto death.* (For theſe Corrections are to be interpreted of Diſeaſes.) And conſidering with the Apoſtle, that God's Chaſtiſements are the moſt Authentick Inſtruments and Atteſtations we can produce of being his genuine Sons, and that to be deſtitute of them, which all Sons have, would be an undeniable Token, and inconteſtable Proof of our being Baſtards. And conſidering yet further with the *Wiſe Man* and the ſame Apoſtle, that they are the fulleſt and cleareſt Evidences to make out our being his darling Favourite ones; *For whom the Lord loveth*

Pſal. 39. 10

Pſal. 39. 10

Prov. 13. 11, 12.

Hebr. 12. 7. & 8.

46.

he

he chaſtneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth. The Collection we ſhall make from ſuch Conſiderations will be, That if we are Sons, we cannot fail of the *incorruptible Inheritance which our Father hath laid up for us in Heaven*; and if we are his beloved Sons, we ſhall taſte deep of his Bounty, we cannot miſs of an ample *Portion* of that Inheritance. And by vertue of ſuch a Deduction we ſhall be enabled to bear our Diſeaſes, which proceed originally from God, and are not the Fruits of our own Diſſoluteneſs and Debauchery, with Patience at leaſt. If it doth not operate thus upon us, but we are reſtleſs and clamorous for being thus treated, we muſt be more mad than they would be, who ſhould complain of the trouble of carrying their Deeds they have to ſhew for proving their Title to a fair Patrimony, and to be rid of this Inconvenience would throw them away.

The nearer Proſpect that Diſeaſes, eſpecially thoſe of Age give us of this Inheritance, and the conſideration that they are taking us by the hand to put us into poſſeſſion of it. The nearer view they afford of our Journeys end, and

and the conſideration that they are bringing us to it as faſt as they can, and of our likelyhood to gain our Liberty, while they are making wide and large Chinks in our Priſons, or unlocking the Doors, or undermining the Walls of them, will very much conduce to this; or elſe we muſt be extreamly ſtupid and egregious Fools. For what Heir, if he was not ſo diſtemper'd, would be peeviſh and diſquieted for being within a very little of having his Eſtate in his hands? What Traveller that were not ſo, after being ſufficiently wearied and tired, and his Spirits almoſt ſpent with the length of the Journey, would repine for being nigh the end of it? Or what Priſoner not being ſo, would murmur that he had a fair opportunity of getting his Diſcharge, or making his eſcape?

Afflicted with Infirmities and Pains, this conſideration is enough to make us bear them patiently, that the recompence of ſuch a Demeanour will be, Our Bodies ſhall renew their ſtrength like Eagles, and we in them like Eagles ſhall mount up to meet the Lord's coming in the Clouds; and that as

as they ſhall renew their Vigour, ſo they ſhall have a perpetual Exemption from all Labour and Fatigue, be capable of rendring God a Homage day and night, and be no more weary of that conſtant Service than Spirits are, and perform it with as much Agility and Expedition as winged *Seraphims* fly upon the execution of his Commands; that they ſhall be no more troubled with groſs feculent Humours, which by their exceſs and quantity are the matter and procreative cauſes of Diſeaſes and Aches, but ſhall be refined to a degree of Purity and Spirituality like that of Ethereal Subſtances. Are we afflicted with Hunger and Thirſt, which when they are extream, are of all our ſenſual Appetites the moſt violent and irreſiſtible, the conſideration that we are approaching towards that condition and ſtate of Life wherein we ſhall not hunger or thirſt any more after that which periſheth; and our hunger and thirſt ſhall be after eternal good; that the one ſhall be ſatiated with thoſe Delicacies with which the Table, at which all the Saints of God who have gone before us, we ſhall ſit down in the Kingdom of Hea-

ven

ven, is furniſhed; the other quench'd in thoſe Rivers of Pleaſure which are ever flowing at the Right Hand of God, the moſt pleaſant that Infinite Goodneſs, which is always ſtreaming out in Emanations of it ſelf, can make them for the Taſte; this thought, if it will give us no eaſe, will keep our Appetites from being enraged and inflamed higher by Impatience.

If under the loſs of our ſight we are not to be comforted with the Philoſophical Speculations, that we ſhall not behold thoſe many offenſive Objects we are every day at moſt conſtrained to do in the World, (Violence and Oppreſſion) that our Underſtandings will receive thereby brighter Illuminations, and the Eye of our Soul ſee the clearer, (for which cauſe ſome Philoſophers, particularly *Democritus*, is ſaid to have blinded himſelf) our Memories more enlarged and ſtrengthened, (ſhall receive more, and return better than before) Nor under that of our hearing, that our Ears are thereby ſhut againſt Impertinency, Clamour, Obſcenity, Blaſphemy, whatſoever might grate ſerious, chaſte or pious Ears: Nor under Dumbneſs, that our Tongues are bound

Hierom. Ep. 32. ad Abigal.

bound up from uttering Vanity and Falſhood, they cannot be employed to the Diſhonour of God, or the Injury of our Neighbour; certainly a ſublimer Conſideration fetch'd from Sacred Scripture, that the recompence of bearing ſuch natural Inconveniences contentedly, and with all humble Deference to him who thought fit to annex them to the tenure of our being here, ſhall be; that our Eyes are opened now to behold the wondrous things of God's Law, a Priviledge peculiar to God's Saints; whereas Gnats and Flies, Piſmires and other Inſects enjoy Light in common with us, and ſhall be opened to behold the glorious Light of God's Countenance, our Ears to be entertain'd with the Muſick of the Angelical Choire, our Tongues looſed to joyn in concert with them in ſinging the Divine Praiſes will impower us to ſubmit and acquieſce.

S. 7. § 6. N. 3. *mem.* 2. Our own Death with Patience and Courage.

(2.) The ſame Contemplation will ſerve to make us bear with Patience that Evil, which of all others is generally look'd upon as the moſt terrible and grievous, (becauſe it deprives us of the Enjoyments we taſte a ſweetneſs in; and of Life, of which we are ſo ridiculouſly

culouſly fond, that for the moſt part we had rather be miſerable than be without it; while we have no Notion, or a very wrong one, of the Souls Immortality, and no Faith of the Reſurrection of the Body; or if we believe both, we do not attend to that Belief) the Sentence of Death I mean, when God denounceth it, and to meet with Courage the Execution of it.

For ſetting the future Rewards before our Eyes, we ſhould look upon Death then as no other than the Goal, at which, the Race being done, we are to receive the Meeds we ran for; as the Port where landed we are upon the Shoar of eternal Happineſs; as a generous Patron freeing us out of a ſtate of Slavery, and the Priſon where we are detained, and raiſing us to a glorious condition of Liberty; as a kind Friend, by whoſe means we are conducted to thoſe Manſions of Bliſs which have been long ſince provided for us in our Fathers Houſe, as removing out of a Cottage of Loom and Clay, expoſed to the Injuries of all ſorts of Weathers into a Building not made with Hands, *i. e.* to ſay, not as theſe earthly Tabernacles; into a Palace

lace, whose Foundations, Walls and Gates are all of precious Stones in the highest Heavens, as a retiring from the Hardships and Dangers of this present Warfare, wherin we are engaged in continual Contests with Flesh and Blood within, and Principalities and Powers and Spiritual Wickednesses without, by whom we are so oft and so shamefully foil'd, to a place of perfect Peace and Security, free from the least annoyance of such Incursions, or such Assailants, or any fears of them; where, having obtained our great Captains Dismission and Licence to retire, we shall expect till he make his return to Earth; after which, his business being done there, and we having Bodies prepared for us to put on, we shall attend on him when he makes his second glorious Ascent into Heaven, and be a part of that days Pomp and Celebrity; as the putting off Rags of Corruption in order to be arrayed in Robes of State; as that which manageth an advantageous Exchange for us; and by means of which for Misery and Calamity we gain Happiness; for Tears and Grief, Joys; for painful Labour and Toil, Rest; for carking Cares,

Cares, Delights and Pleaſures; for Ignominy, Glory; for Obſcurity, Splendor; for a Dungeon, a Palace; in ſhort, (for nothing can be more ſaid or thought, and that is comprehenſive of all which can be ſaid or thought) Heaven for Earth, God and the Society of Angels and the Spirits of Juſt Men made perfect, for the World, its Vanities and profligate Company.

If they, who, when they ſtood upon the Threſhold of this World, ready to leave it, had no View, or but an obſcure and uncertain one of another confining upon this, could ſupport themſelves with Patience under its proluſory Agonies and Skirmiſhes, and fortifie themſelves with Courage againſt its down-right Attack and Blow, by the help of ſuch Meditations as theſe, (That dying was but going out of a weather-beaten Houſe; a travelling to another place, as *Plato*; a Diſmiſſion from their attendance here, as the Emperor *Antoninus*; (the ſame Phraſe almoſt by which the Aged *Simeon* expreſſeth it, when he calls it a *Departure*) but a going the way which all muſt tread, as *Horace*; but a putting off the tatter'd Garments of Fleſh and

Blood, as *Maximus*; but a Sleeping, but a Change, as *Arian* and others thought) then certainly those who through the Opticks of Divine Revelations have the full prospect of another Life after this, and by the Evidences of Faith and the Testimony of the Holy Spirit with theirs, are assured of being Possessors of it, will not only be upheld by Patience, but receive abundant Consolation against the otherwise affrightful approach of Death, from this Consideration, That it is but a Passage or Introduction into Immortality.

2. Against the kinds of Death, or the circumstances of it, which may make the appearance frightful.

This too, as it will sustain and comfort us against the Pangs or Terrors of Death it self, so it will do it against the various Circumstances and Appertenances of it; such I call the Manner, Kind, Time, Place of our Death; which, if there be nothing formidable, or nothing but what's tolerable in Death it self, can introduce no such material and substantial difference, as to render Death in this or that place, at this or another time, this or that way of dying, contrary to the common nature of Death, terrible and insupportable.

As

As therefore it matters not upon the Square, whether we die in Childhood, Youth, Manhood, or Old Age, ſooner or later, any more than it doth in what Seaſon of the year, whether in Spring, Summer, Autumn or Winter; (and if there be any odds, they ſeem to have the advantage, who die, having ſeen leaſt of the Worlds Villany, or felt leaſt of the Calamities of Humane Life) whether we die at home or abroad, ſince every place under the Sky is a wiſe and brave Man's Country, (he being a Citizen and Deniſon of the World) or none on this ſide Heaven is, and every part of the Earth is equally diſtant from that; whether in the poſſeſſion of our Honours in our own Country, or in Baniſhment in another, ſince this may ſend us into places more benign and hoſpitable than our own Soil was, where we may be more eſteemed for our Vertue, ſee more Order, Gravity and Conduct, and greater Examples of Prudence, Fidelity and Conſtancy than among our own People; whether we die at Sea or Land, whether we feed Fiſh or Worms, whether we die a natural or a violent Death, whether our

Prison Doors fly open of themselves or they are broken open by Force; whether we die on our Beds by a Fever, or by Fire at a Stake; by a Squinnancy there, or by a Halter on a Gibbit; by a lingring Consumption there, or by the sudden stroak of a Sword or Ax on the Scaffold; by the Torture of the Stone or Gout, or the Iliack Passion there, or by being broken on the Wheel; whether we die that which is called a glorious Death, by the hands of our Enemy in the Field, or that which is reckon'd an ignominious one, by the hand of a Publick Executioner, provided the Cause be not Criminal; for its this alone can make any Death scandalous, as it is only the goodness of a Cause can make any honourable: Virtue can ennoble every Death, give Glory to the Scandal of the Cross; and Piety can make the Person who is hanged, drawn and quartered, an illustrious fulgent Martyr: And neither the Tree, nor Block, nor any kind of Death can disgrace Honesty, or shame Religion. Nor last of all, whether after Death, our Bodies receive a decent Interment, or they are exposed to the Beasts of the Field, or their

Quarters

Quarters given to the Fowls of the Air; *i. e.* whether they rot under Ground or above, (as *Theodorus* the *Cyrenæan* told the Tyrant who threatned him with the Croſs or Gibbet, *That it was all one to him how he died*) provided we have not merited this laſt Treatment as Malefactors, but 'tis the ungrateful Return which is made us for doing our Duty: For then they who have not a Grave, have Heaven indeed for a Canopy to cover them, or lie under its vaulted Roof; their Quarters fixt on Poles are the Trophies and Monuments which Malice her ſelf erected to their Virtue while ſhe oppreſſed it, the memory of which will embalm their Names to Immortality, while no Sear-cloaths, nor Unguents, nor Gums, nor any other Art ſhall be able to preſerve the Bodies of their unjuſt Judges from Putrefaction, nor any Vindications their Names from rottenneſs and ſtanch, worſe than eternal Oblivion.

Cic. Tuſcul. l. 3.

Valer. l. 3. c. 3.

I ſay therefore, as it matters not upon the ſquare what kind of Death, or where or how we die, if ſo be we are prepared to die well; ſo if there was any real difference cauſed by the kind,

kind, manner, time or place, which might aggravate one kind of Death above another, or make it more terrible or intolerable at one time or place than another, yet the juſt conſideration that the iſſue of every Death was to every good Man in all times and places the ſame, and would certainly determine in his Eternal Felicity, would allay all the affrightfulneſs our Imaginations are apt to raiſe in us, remove all the Difficulties, correct all the roughneſs, and mitigate all the ſharpneſs and pains they are ready to figure to themſelves to be in any of the ſorts of Death.

Now for the keeping up this aſſured Expectation of a Reward, on which depends the meeting of a violent Death, or the bearing a natural one, or the Diſeaſes preparatory to it, with conſtancy, that our Hope may enter within the Veil where this Happineſs is kept; a thing very difficult to do, while our Souls have ſo much affinity with mortal Bodies, and Commerce with Sence. We are to conſider who it is that hath promiſed to beſtow it; he is God; and if the Word of a good Prince is as great ſecurity as a Subject can ask or deſire, ſurely nothing can

be

be wiſh'd for or imagin'd greater than his who is immutable. And that while the fulfilling of other Promiſes depends upon this tacit Condition, if he ſees it convenient for us; the performance of this reſts only upon the Performance of our Duty.

This Conſideration of what Death is, and what it leads to, as it will thus ſupport us with Patience to bear its Sentence, or arm us with Courage to meet it when it marches directly againſt our ſelves; ſo it will uphold our Spirits, that they ſink not under the weight of Grief; ſmooth them, that they be not exaſperated, when its Stings pierce our neareſt and deareſt Friends; a Paſſion, which is many times too ſtrong for thoſe who have maſtered all others; (as St. *Hierom* acknowledged of the Lady *Paula*) becauſe Nature, even good Nature is on her ſide; rather than lament their Loſs, if we were not corrupted by Intereſt to bewail our own, in being bereſt of their Society, which was that St. *Hierom* confeſſeth, ſway'd them to mourn for *Nepotian*, we ſhould rejoyce at the important Advantages they have gained by it, at their being

S. 7. § 3. *m.* 3. The death of our friends with patience and evenneſs.

safely landed at the Port for which they were bound, arrived at that delicious place toward which they bent their Journey, as being discharged from Prison, manumised out of Servitude, and infranchised of the noblest Country and City.

We should then regard the committing their dead Bodies to the ground, while at the same time we know that they shall there rot and crumble into Dust, be the Food of Worms and creeping things, (a Thought indeed, which of it self, without proceeding further or looking higher, inclines us to make lamentation for those who, warm'd with a spark of Life, were the *Light of our Eyes*, and the *Joy of our Hearts*) but as a leading them officiously into their Chambers, or their
Isa. 26. 20. ceremonious entring into them, and shutting the Doors upon themselves; as a resting themselves, and sleeping on those Beds there for some short time;
Isa 57. 2. from which being roused by the Archangels powerful Voice, crying, *Awake ye that sleep in the dust, and rise*; together with the Blast of God's Trump, and the mighty Shout with which the
1 Thess 4. 16. Lord, attended by a numerous retinue

of

of the Heavenly Hoſt, ſhall deſcend; and quickned by a living Spirit, which ſhall return again to their compacted organized Duſt, ſhall come forth out of thoſe Dormitories recruited with new Vigour and Activity, like Giants refreſhed with Wine and Sleep; decked and adorned with greater Finery than ever Royal Brides proceeding from their Bed-chambers to the Temple ſhew'd on the day of their Marriage; more richly attired, and more magnificently ſet out than Eaſtern Monarchs are on the day of their Birth or Coronation; and thereupon think it as improper to ſhed Tears upon their Graves, as it would be to weep upon ſuch ſolemn occaſions of Feſtivity, as are the Birth-day, Nuptials, or inthronization of our Prince.

Had we this Contemplation at the Funeral of our Friends, that inſtead of thoſe vile, ignoble, frail, lumpiſh Bodies they were cloath'd with here, and which were depoſited in the Grave; inſtead of Duſt and Corruption, (the Garment that ſhall cover them there) they ſhall come forth thence at the day of the Reſurrection, apparelled in rich Veſtures of divers precious Colours gracefully 1 Cor. 15. 42, 43. 44, 45.

fully mingled together, *i. e.* to ſay, in Bodies endowed with Impaſſibility, Glory, Strength, Agility, and that in theſe Bodies ſo nobly qualified, and over and above actuated with Souls more Celeſtial than they were, they ſhall be led into Manſions of Bliſs, ſuch as mortal Eye never ſaw, nor can; nor Ear heard of by the relation of Fame, nor are to be comprehended by the largeſt Heart, as Mens are now, there to abide for ever.

Did we riſe higher in our Contemplation, or come nearer to our ſelves, and conſider that we our ſelves, if we ſhall be found alive at that day when that Honour ſhall be done them, ſhall have our Bodies, as we wear them, changed upon us into that glorious condition; or if we have put them off, and they are laid in the Grave, we ſhall have them raiſed and exalted to the ſame ſtate; and that in Body and Spirit conjunctly we ſhall enjoy the mutual Society of each other in perfect and interminable Felicity, without the poſſibility or fear of being ſeparated again, inſtead of having our Spirits miſerably dejected, as uſually they are, when we are divided from

our

our Friends, or are forced to part Company, we ſhall have them exceedingly raiſed, inſtead of doleful ſilence or ſad aſtoniſhment, which is our ordinary Behaviour upon ſuch occaſions, we ſhould break forth into ſinging and joy.

Cicero who had no perfect Knowledge of this Myſtery of the Reſurrection of the Body, and Re-union both of Soul and Body, and had only ſome little glimmering Light let in upon his Mind as through a Crany, by which he diſcovered ſomething of the Immortality of the Soul; thought that the ſtrongeſt Cordial we could adminiſter to our ſelves for our Conſolation upon the Death of our Friends, was to be drawn from ſuch Meditations as theſe: That they were not wholly taken from us, not utterly loſt, but only for a certain time removed out of our ſight and company, to which when we arrived at the appointed Boundary of our Lives, we ſhould be reſtored again, and renew the Sweets of our uninterrupted Acquaintance and Communication. *Cic. de Conſol.*

But

But we who have a clearer and diſtincter perception of the Immortality of the Soul by that Goſpel which brought it to Life, have conſequently the benefit of a ſtronger conſideration thence, where we are taught, that by the mediation of Death we ſhall be conducted to the enjoyment of the Society of thoſe dear Friends, whoſe Converſation we ſo highly valued on Earth, when it was not without its Errors and Failings, which ſhall be to our higheſt ſatisfaction, becauſe we ſhall have it in the nobleſt and perfecteſt manner; love them to the utmoſt pitch of Fervency, and the moſt refined degree of Purity, for whom we had kind and unſpotted Affections here; and we ſhall have an eternal Vacation from all other employments to do this, to love God and them, his as well as our Friends, and joyntly with them to adore his infinitely amiable Excellencies, which under any leſs ſpace than Eternity, cannot be ſufficiently admired or worthily magnified.

Heb. 11. 39, 41. 12. 22, 23.

But we have yet a ſtronger Conſolation than this, that our Souls which now only have an imperfect Communication by the aſſiſtance, or rather hindrance

hindrance of bodily Organs, ſhall then, diſroab'd of ſuch Bodies, immediately know and correſpond with each other, and have a farther diſcovery by the help of that Light of the Reſurrection of the Body; that the Bodies of our departed Friends, being raiſed out of the Duſt, and made like unto that *glorious Body of our Lord*, which is ſeated on the *right hand of the Throne of Majeſty on high*; and being rejoyned by their Spirits, ſhall be caught up in the Clouds, when he ſhall return again with all that Power in Heaven and Earth that was given him upon his Reſurrection, and in all the pompous Triumph that a Train or Guard of innumerable Legions of Angels clad in ſhining Light can make up, to judge the World; and that we who ſhall be found alive at that day, having in an inſtant changed our Weeds, and put on or being cloathed upon with Roabs of Immortality, ſhall likewiſe be caught up together with them, or immediately after them to meet him, and ſhall, when that buſineſs is diſpatched, aſcend up with him into the higheſt Heavens, and be ever there with the Lord, and one another in Glory.

1 Theſſ. 4. 13, 16, 17, 18.

1 Cor. 15. 23. & 25.

The

The Apoſtle, who began at firſt with perſwading us to dry up our Eyes, and wipe away all Tears, which might trickle thence through a natural ſoftneſs, for ſuch Friends *who died in the Lord*, in his Grace and Favour; upon a firm belief that Jeſus died and roſe again, and an aſſured hope grounded thereupon, that thoſe alſo who ſleep in Jeſus, parted hence when Death cloſed their Eyes with a belief of his Reſurrection as paſs'd, and their own as future, ſhall God bring to him when he returns to Judicature; that *we ſhould not be ſorry as men who had no hope*, no hope of ſeeing them more, proceeds in the next ſtop to ſtir us up to chearfulneſs upon the account of this Faith and Hope, and counſels us to uſe them for the raiſing and animating one another, if dejected upon ſuch imagined Loſſes. *Wherefore comfort ye one another with theſe words.*

1 Theſſ. 4. 18.

The Evangelical Prophet *Iſaiah* did before him propound the Conſideration of this Doctrine, (though then but darkly delivered or faintly entertained) for the ſame purpoſe, for the inſpiriting with Joy ſuch Mourners in *Judah*, who were diſconſolate upon the Mortality of

of their Friends, that their Dead ſhould live again. His Words are, *Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe; awake and ſing ye that dwell in the duſt: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth ſhall caſt forth the dead.* And the ſence of them ſeems to be this: Chear and raiſe up your Hearts, ye whom Affliction hath brought low, whoſe Bellies by reaſon thereof cleave to the duſt of the Ground, who lie overwhelmed with and buried under loads of Sorrow for the Slain of your People, whoſe Bodies lie ſcattered upon the ground; or for your deceaſed Friends, of whom Death hath by other ways poſſibly than the Sword bereft you; for they o'er whom ye mourn ſhall at the laſt day, together with my dead Body, be raiſed out of the Duſt or ſtate of Corruption, enlivened by the quickning Breath that ſhall return into them at the Word of the Almighty; even as tender Herbs killed by the ſharpneſs of Winter Froſts and Colds, ſhall by thoſe vital Dews and Heat the kind Spring liberally affords, recover, rear up their fallen Heads, and put on their gaudy Livery again. Iſa. 26. 19.

Let

Let us therefore comport with the Apoſtles Exhortation; inſtead of conſuming our ſelves with Grief, which corrodes and eats as much as Envy and Cares do, for our departed Friends; thoſe I mean, whoſe Piety and Virtue have made the Conjunction nearer, and the Cement cloſer than meer Fleſh and Blood could, and whom we have ground to hope departed hence in the Lord, let us comfort our ſelves that they have made ſo happy an Exit; yea, rather rejoyce, conſidering their departure hence, not as a forſaking, but a preceding us who ſurvive; not as a going quite away from us, but as an orderly paſſing on before into another World; as a turning out of the ordinary road of Time, wearied with the Journey that way, into that of Eternity.

Thoſe Perſons indeed on whom Death executes the Office of a Sergeant, arreſts them to deliver them up to Divine Vengeance; thoſe for whom *Tophet* of old was ordained, for whom everlaſting Fire was prepared, ought in juſt pity to be lamented, becauſe their departure hence is into that Lake of Brimſtone which burneth with

which burneth with this Fire; the mouth of Hell receives and devours their Souls, as the Pit doth their Bodies; and a ſecond Death gnaws on them as Worms and creeping things do on their putrified Carcaſes. Tears of Compaſſion may be ſhed for ſuch Unbelievers and wicked impenitent Doers, becauſe they paſs hence into the moſt ſad deplorable Eſtate, out of which neither our Prayers nor their own Cries can relieve them, any more than the Tears of either can allay their Flames.

But we are to exult at the departure of the Righteous, (ſuch bleſſed ones of their Father, as had an Inheritance deſigned for them in his Kingdom *before the foundation of the world*, of whom he gave his Angels charge here, commanded them to ſerve and attend on them as miniſtring Spirits to their Salvation, about whom he gave his Heavenly Hoſt Orders to pitch their Camp to guard them from Evil) as quitting only their incommodious Tabernacles of Fleſh, leaving only the Miſeries, and Diſquietudes, and Filthineſs of this World to paſs into Manſions of Reſt, and Bliſs, and Glory provided

for them in their Fathers Houſe; and to which the ſame Guardian Angels ſhall take care to convoy their Souls ſafe, which at the moment of parting from their Bodies, they commended into the hands of their merciful Redeemer.

Valer. Max. l. 2. c. 6. Solin. mela.

The *Thracians* thought they had good reaſon to rejoyce at the Funerals of their Friends, on one part meerly of this conſideration, becauſe they were delivered from the Calamities which environed their Life here. And others, who thought they had reaſon to lament the Dead, becauſe they had loſt the Light, yet judged there was a Modeſty to be obſerved in Grief, and a meaſure ſet to Tears, the Voluptuouſneſs of a ſick Mind, as well as to other Pleaſure.

And if after Death we make *Lamentations* for them, it ought to be upon a Reflection, that they were conſtrained to be ſo long abſent from the Lord, while they ſojourned in *Meſech*, (either a Country or time of prolongation) and were confined to the *Tents of Kedar*, (this Land of Darkneſs and Blackneſs, or theſe gloomy Tabernacles of Earth) as the ſame *Thracians* howl'd at the

the Birth of their own or Friends Children, looking upon it as an entrance upon a woful Tragical Scene.

When *he maketh the Storm a Calm*, tranſlates our Friends from this Life into another, *ſo that the waves thereof are ſtill*, they are no longer toſſed upon inſtable Billows, nor driven by uncertain Winds; *then as they are glad becauſe they are at quiet, and he bringeth them to their deſired Haven*: So ought we to praiſe the Lord for his Goodneſs to them, that they have got off the tempeſtuous and dangerous Sea, and reach'd their quiet Port. Thus the Chriſtians at *Rome* celebrated the Obſequies of *Fabiola* with Pſalms of Thanſgiving, and the loud ſounding of the Hallelujahs upon this occaſion ſhook the Temple's Roofs.

Pſal. 107. 28, 29.

S. Hierom. Ep. 30. *ad Oceanum.*

If we behave our ſelves otherwiſe, grieve and make bitter Moan for their Death, we do them wrong; *i. e.* (as much as we can do them any, whoſe Felicity is incapable of being leſſened) by our ill Suſpicions, Jealouſies and Fears, (or ſeeming ill ones) of their condition, whether it be happy or not; or elſe our ſelves by diſtruſting or appearing to diſtruſt the Immortality of

the Soul, and Reſurrection of the Body; as if ſuppoſing that the one at the moment of Death evaporates into Air, and the other after ſome time ſhall be irrevocably loſt in the Duſt: Upon which account St. *Hierom* adviſeth *Heliodorus* to correct his Tenderneſs, and repreſs his Tears for *Nepotian*, leſt what was Affection to his Nephew, might be conſtrued by Infidels as Deſpair in God) Or it ſeems as if we envyed their Beatitude, if we believe they are poſſeſſed of it, and repined at our own Lot, that we are left in a ſtate of Miſery. And we ſtain the Glory of our Faith, while with the aſſiſtance of that we do not, what Men of Infidelity could, *i. e.* ſupport the Death of their Friends without any piteous mourning or Complaints.

Ep. 3. ad Heliodor.

And yet it may not be indecent for them to weep for them whom they may think, or at leaſt cannot tell but they have utterly loſt; but its diſhonourable for a Chriſtian to do ſo, while he knows they live, or but profeſſeth to believe that their Death is a tranſlation to Life Eternal.

Mourning and Blacks are improper on this occaſion, and very diſagreeable

to

to their ſtate of Felicity, whom we believe to be arrayed in *White Garments* and *Palms*.

Since then, ſuch is the Advantage accrewing by Patience, that it ſhall be rewarded with immortal Happineſs, and Diſeaſes lead to the Door, Death opens it, or is the very Door it ſelf through which we muſt paſs to take Poſſeſſion of it, conſidering this, What can we do more reaſonably, than upon a Bed of Sickneſs to uphold our weak Spirits, and ſuſtain our feeble afflicted Limbs with Patience? Then to be armed with it, when we ſee our laſt Enemy, Death, approaching towards us to ſeize our Perſons; and the more, if it be violent, with how much more terrible appearances Malice and Barbarity have dreſſed it, or with how much more Horror it is arrayed by them on purpoſe to diſorder us, provided always our Cauſe be good, and we are condemned to ſuffer it for Righteouſneſs ſake?

Or what can we do more reaſonably, than to ſupport our Minds with this, that they do not droop or flag when Death hath removed from us any of our beloved Friends; if ſuch,

whom we may upon sufficient grounds believe to have died in the Lord, in peace with him, while they died not for him, or laid not down their Lives for a Testimony to him, or signed his Doctrine with their Blood; esteeming their Death to have done them the favour of instating them in the Regions of Bliss; and thereupon looking on the other way of behaving our selves, of immoderate Mourning for them, as that which betrays either Infidelity in general of the Souls subsisting after this Life, or too much suspicion and fear in particular of their happy Estate; or if none of these, yet too much partial Love to our selves, because they are separated from us for a time; or something of Envy, while we lament their being made happy before us, and our selves being left still to combat for that Prize they have obtained.

S 7.5 7. 5. Ephes. 13. & 17. To this Armour, this *Shield of Faith* and *Helmet of Salvation*, as the belief and hope of Eternal Rewards, the consideration of which I have been recommending, is called, let us in the last

laſt place joyn the Sword of God's Spirit, which in the Apoſtles Interpretation, who adviſeth to take it, is the *Word of God*, *i. e.* Let us be frequent in converſing with the Holy Scriptures, which inculcate the Practice of this Virtue, that ſo our Obligation to do ſo being freſh in our Memories, we may the more readily comply with it; (whereas for want of ſuch a renewing as in time it my be effaced there, ſo we ſhall be the more unfit to diſcharge it) thoſe Oracles put us upon labouring and ſtriving to get the maſtery of our Affections, from which as long as they remain unſubdew'd, ariſes all our diſturbance, all our inteſtine Wars and Fightings proceed, whereas the Conqueſt of them yields the pleaſing Fruit of Peace, and renders us for ever after invincible; for we can never be baffled, while we deſire nothing but what we have or are, while God's Will is ours, and the Circumſtances his Providence hath placed us in are thoſe which our very Hearts would wiſh for; we are not to be diſordered by the loſs of Goods, Lands, Liberty, good Name, or when that of Life is threatned us; nor to be tranſported with

To read frequently the holy Scriptures, and meditate on the Precepts and Examples of Patience there ſet forth, and to be diligent in praying for this Grace.

Success, as Children when they have good Luck at Play, or with any Delights; when we know not how to grieve, but for having offended God, nor how to rejoyce, but for having done him that Service which he is pleased to accept; while he is our Hope and our Fear, and we neither put our Trust in Man, nor apprehend what he can do unto us, whose utmost Power reacheth but to *kill the Body*; we disarm Tyrants, and make their Rage indeed but Impotency which cannot hurt us; and he only who basely fears or poorly wishes, loseth the ground he should keep, Liberty of Mind; throws away the Shield which should defend him, and works the Link of that Chain in which he shall be dragged.

Let us be diligent in reading them, (as the Virgins in the Nunnery of Lady *Paula*, and the Empress *Pulcheria* and her Sisters in the Palace did every day a portion) which from the one end to the other, even from the Righteous *Abel* under the Dispensation of the Natural Law, unto the Holy Jesus the Promulger of the Gospel; and from the opening of that by him to the shutting

V. S. Chrysost 43. in 1 Cor.

ſhutting and ſealing it up by his Apoſtle *John*, preſent us with the Examples of God's Saints, exerciſed all along with Tribulations, and marching on with Patience, Courage and Conſtancy, eſpecially ſuch as were of Chriſt's Diſciples, (for his Kingdom was a Kingdom of Tribulation and Patience) and for this reaſon ſhining now, according to the Inequality of their Trials and Sufferings, and of Fortitude ſhew'd under them, either as leſs luminous Stars, or as the Sun, the great Fountain of Light, in the Firmament of Glory, that animated by the feaſibleneſs of the Duty, or inſtigated with the Emulation of them, we may deport our ſelves as they did. Let us be careful in meditating on them, which every where propound Noble Rewards to excite and provoke us to the Performance of this particular Duty, and for our Encouragement while we diſcharge it; which God hath appointed as the proper Inſtrument in his own hands; or what's the ſame, in thoſe of his Bleſſed Spirit, to form Patience, or to get Hope and Comfort in our Souls.

S. *Aug. tr.* 7. *in Joan.*

For whatſoever things were written in former times, whether under the Adminiſtration

Rom. 15. 18.

miniſtration of the Law or Goſpel, *were written* [for this end] *for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

Theſe were *David*'s Solace and Refreſhment; theſe his Stay and Support under the Troubles which encampaſs'd him round about.

Pſ.119.56. *His Word was his Comfort in his Afflictions, and that quickned him.*

52. *He thought upon his Judgments, and his Soul received Comfort.*

111. *His Teſtimonies were the rejoycing of his Heart.*

His Law was his Delight, and ſuch a one, that he profeſſeth, (ſuch was its Virtue and Efficacy) *Unleſs thy* Pſ.92.103. *Law had been my delight, I had periſhed in mine affliction.* Elſewhere he extols the Sweetneſs of his Words, that *they were ſweeter to his throat than honey to his mouth*; and of his Judgments, *that they were ſweeter than the honey and the honey-comb.*

Jonathan the High Prieſt and Prefect of the Jewiſh Nation in the Letter he wrote to the *Lacedemonians* for the renewing the Alliance between their ſtate and that of the *Jews*, that it might not

not be imagined he implored it meanly, as if his People could not ſubſiſt without a Confederacy with theirs, acquaints them thus---- *For we have the Books of the Holy Scripture in our hands to comfort us.* The great St. *Auguſtine* for this purpoſe prayed, *That the Scriptures might be his chaſte delight.* The ancient Chriſtians bewailed it as the greateſt Diſaſter of their Perſecution, which drove them into Dens and Caves to ſecure their Perſons, that the ſame Darkneſs which concealed them deprived them of the comfort of reading the Holy Scriptures; and they declared theſe were their chief delight, and the Joy of their Hearts while they lived, and when dying they ordered the Sacred Code ſhould be laid upon their Breaſts, and buried with them.

1 Mach. 12. 9.

S. Auguſt. Confeſ. l. 11. *c.* 2. § 2.

v. *Acta S. S. Agapes*, &c. *apud Baron. ad A.* 304.

S. 7. § 8. To pray to God for this Grace.

With reading and meditating daily only on God's Word, aſſiduous and ardent Prayer ſhould always go along, that God would be pleaſed to make our exerciſing our ſelves in his Law Day and Night, as the Pſalmiſt did, as beneficial for the comforting us, as it was to him for that end; who as he

was

was directed by God to call upon him, and promised that he would deliver him; so following the Direction, found the Issue answerable to the Assurance: For when he was troubled, as he acknowledgeth, *he called upon him, and he heard him, and according to the multitude of sorrows that were in his heart, his comforts refreshed his Soul.*

That what therein may more especially conduce thereto, we would set so home upon our Spirits, and fix so fast there, as never to be pluck'd up or rooted thence; imprint or engrave so deep upon our Hearts, as never to be erased or obliterated; that he would put his holy Spirit into our inner parts, and by him bring to our continual remembrance, set in a clear Light and a direct view constantly before us, such Declarations, Commands, Promises, Threats, Reproofs, Examples, as have any thing peculiar in them to serve to this excellent Design.

This, if at our urgent Request, he shall grant us, or by our wrestling with him we shall obtain, then shall
Col. 3. 2. that come to pass, that being reminded of our Duty, *not to set our affections*

on

on things below, which are not within our reach to get as we would, nor power to keep after we have got them; to lay up for our ſelves *Treaſure in Heaven which fade not away* by diſpenſing part of our Treaſure, we have been by God's Bounty endowed with here, but corruptible as the Earth out of which it was dug, to our indigent Brethren; remembranced of our Duty by our Alms and Charity to make Friends of our unrighteous Mammon, *i. e.* Riches, which if not unjuſtly got by Fraud and Oppreſſion, are yet falſe and deceitful in themſelves, that diſcharged from our Stewardſhip, and diſmiſſed hence, we may be received into *everlaſting Habitations*; of our Duty to *leave all* if occaſion ſo require, that we may with greater Expedition follow our Maſter when and where he ſhall call us: As the Lady *Fabiola*, having diſpoſed of all her Worldly Goods before, which was like heavy Baggage ſerving only to encumber, made her ſelf the lighter to fly to Heaven; or as the Apoſtles, who, though in act they forſook only their Smacks, and Fiſherboats, and Nets, yet in purpoſe left the whole World, reſolving

Mat. 6. 19, 20.

Luke 16.

Mat. 5 40.

S. Hierom. Ep. 30. ad Oceanum.

reſolving never to be burdened with any part of it, that they might keep better pace with their Leader.

Being, I ſay, thus reminded by the Holy Spirit, of abſtracting our Affections from the Earth, and things which periſh both with and without uſing, gathering Ruſt if hoarded, which in time will eat them; and breeding, if laid up, Moths which will conſume them; of communicating and diſtributing of our Goods, which is yet leſs than retaining no Propriety in what we have; than ſelling our Lands and Houſes, and laying the Price down at the Apoſtles or their Succeſſors Feet, to be diſpoſed of by them; it ſhall then come to paſs, that the Caſualties of Loſſes, or Diminutions in our Eſtate ſhall not diſturb us, which upon many accounts we ſtand bound to part with. Then being re-
Mat. 5.40. minded by this Spirit, if we have two Cloaks, of giving one to him who lacketh; of parting with our Cloak to him who by Violence and Oppreſſion would take away our Coat, rather than contend in endleſs Suits of Law, or before Foreign Judges, for recovering of it, or Damages, it

ſhall

ſhall come to paſs that the Depredations and Robberies which the Lawleſs and Maſterleſs may commit on our Goods, ſhall not have the force to diſturb us.

Then being reminded by him of our Maſters Admonition, to *take up his Croſs and follow after him*; for which we have his Encouragement, That if we loſe our Lives for his ſake, we ſhall ſave them; to *rejoyce and be exceeding glad when men ſhall perſecute, revile, and ſay all manner of evil of us falſely for the name of Chriſt.* More Patience under the edge of the Sword or Ax, or under the Laſh and Scourge of the moſt cutting Tongue, will ſeem a Duty ſo eaſie, as not to need any farther recommendation or preſſing. Luke 9.23, 24. Mat. 5. 11. & 21.

Then being re-minded or inſtructed by him, that thoſe Diſeaſes by which we are not given over to Death, are ſent for our Chaſtiſement and Correction; and thoſe by which we are, which tend to our Diſſolution, ſhall bring us to be with Chriſt; we ſhall not fret or vex our ſelves under Remedies, whoſe end is to make us better, or Methods to make us happy.

Then

Then being reminded by him of the Faith into which we were once solemnly Baptized, and daily make a Profession of, that *Christ having died, rose again, and became the first Fruits of them who sleep, who in due time and order shall be awakened and quickned by him; and such who fall asleep in him, he shall bring along with him when he returns to judge the world.* We should not be overwhelmed in a Deluge of excessive Sorrow for our departed Friends, as if we were utterly bereft of all hopes of seeing them more: But on the other side, raise and comfort our selves up we should with the Belief and Hope, that they having, upon leave granted, withdrawn themselves from this Warfare for a Season, shall make their appearance to together with us under the Standard of the Lord of Life and Glory at the General Rendezvouse of the Quick and Dead; and that in the mean time, while we are deprived of them, and we our selves absent from the Lord, we may by holy Offices have Communion with God, and enjoy him in whom and for whom they were only dear to us, or ought to have been so.

1 Cor. 15. 20, 22.

1 Thess. 4. 14.

Beg

Beg of him we ſhould farther, to ſend this Spirit to be our immediate Comforter, by ſhining in upon our Souls with ſuch direct Rays of chearful light, as through all the gloomy ſadneſs of our outward condition we may diſcern our belonging to the Election of Grace, and our affliction to be a mark that we are of that little Flock; read the Deeds of our Adoption that made us the Sons of God, and the Charter which gives us as Sons, a Title to an Inheritance reſerved for us in the Heavens; by infuſing into our Hearts ſuch Peace, ſuch Joy and Exultation, which are the Fruits that bleſſed Spirit produceth, where he dwells, upon an inſurance from his concurrent Teſtimony with ours, that our ſins are pardoned, our perſons accepted and juſtified, and that God for having forſaken us for a ſmall moment, will *gather us in great mercies, for having hid his face from us for ſo ſhort a while, will with everlaſting kindneſs look upon us*; that neither Life nor Death, [neither the Calamities of the one, nor Terrors of the other,] *nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers*, (not the Wiles nor rage of Devils) not *things preſent, nor things to come*; (not Iſa. 54. 7, 8.

thoſe we feel, nor thoſe we fear) *not heights nor depths*, (neither Precipices nor Dungeons) *nor any Creature whatever, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the Love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.* That Love, which, he being attoned and reconciled to be our Friend by the meritorious Death of Chriſt hath for us, nor defeat his kind Intentions, nor deprive us of the beneficial effects of that Love, *viz.* our Salvation.

To this Frame and Temper of Spirit, if the Holy Spirit the Comforter ſhall by any of the forementioned Methods, or his own Operation and Influx upon us, vouchſafe to raiſe us, tranſported we ſhall be with the raviſhing Delights of Heaven before we ſhall be caught up thither, be inebriated with its Pleaſures, before we ſit down with the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apoſtles, and the reſt of the honourable Gueſts of that place, to taſte them there; have the Kingdom of Heaven within us, before we are advanced to one of thoſe Manſions in that above us; and we ſhall be prepared to ſay in all truth as St. *Bernard* did, *We had rather be in tribulation, in the fiery Furnace, having*

Serm. 19. *in Pſal* 90.

thus

this Comforter with us, than reign and be glorified in Heaven without him.

And Confident we may be, if we do, beſeech him to give us this Spirit, the Comforter, with that Faith, Ardor and Importunity as we ought, that he who promiſed to give him to thoſe who asked, (asked Believing) fervently and inceſſantly, will in purſuance of his immutable Promiſe beſtow him upon us, if not in ſuch high degrees and meaſures as I have mentioned, yet in ſuch a one at leaſt as may ſupport us with ſuch a ſufficient ſtock of Comfort as may carry us through our preſent Walk, this Vale of Tears, till we come to the Mount of God; as may enable us to bear our Croſs with chearfulneſs, till it be taken off our Shoulders, and erected into a Trophy of Glory.

In this Confidence therefore, that not one Title of his Promiſes ſhall paſs away, (while all things elſe beſides his Truth as immovable and unchangeable as they appear to be, ſhall do ſo) without a due Completion; let us, as many as are afflicted, apply our ſelves to him for the execution of it, while we are in trouble, pour out our Heart be-

fore him in ſome ſuch Prayer as this:

A Prayer for *Patience*.

O *God, juſt and righteous in all thy dealings with the Sons and Daughters of Men; but withal, abundantly compaſſionate to them, look down in much pity upon me thy poor afflicted Servant.*

Be not angry with me for ever, nor ſuffer thy wrath to burn continually like Fire.

Forget not to be gracious, and ſhut not up thy loving-kindneſs in diſpleaſure: But in Judgment remember Mercy, and ſhew it by removing or mitigating my Sufferings; or if it ſhall be thy good pleaſure to afflict me yet farther by continuing them, ſupport me by thy mighty Arm to bear them with Patience and Courage.

To this end give me a Heart to conſider, that miſery is the common incident of humane Life; that Calamities of one kind or other attend upon every ſtate and condition of it, eſpecially on the Chriſtian, and that they who are called by that honourable Name, abſtracting from their hopes of happineſs in another life, are

are in this of all men most miserable; that they who will live godly in Christ Jesus, besides the ordinary Evils they are liable to as Men, must over and above suffer Persecution as Christians: And yet to ponder withal, that none of those happen without thy knowledge and designation; that my Afflictions do not come out of the Dust, nor trouble spring out of the ground, but are the Demerits of my Sins, and the just Punishment inflicted by thee for them.

And then assist me in arguing with my self, how unreasonable it is for me a Malefactor to complain of being punished according to the deserts of my Offences, that I ought rather in all equity to bear thy Indignation, O Lord, because I have sinned against thee. Convince me likewise, that how harsh soever thy dealing with me is apt to seem to Flesh and Blood, to which all Correction is grievous, yet of very faithfulness thou hast caused me to be troubled; and then open my Lips to make this humble acknowledgment, That righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy Judgments towards me in particular.

Enable me to proceed yet farther, and in an entire submission of my self to thee,

and

and an abſolute reſignation of all my Concerns to thy Will and Pleaſure, ſay, Good is the hand of the Lord, let him do with me as ſeemeth good to him.

To this purpoſe make me ſee and know that thy Chaſtiſements, while they are always the effects of thy Juſtice, are not always the marks of thy heavy diſpleaſure; but oft-times on the contrary, the badges of thy favour, the cognizance of thy Children, and the proofs of thy Paternal Love to them.

And upon this ground make me not meerly to ſubmit my ſelf to thy abſolute diſpoſal as my Heavenly Father, but to adore thee likewiſe, and return thee all poſſible thanks for vouchſafing to uſe thy Rod for my Correction and Inſtruction.

O may I, amidſt thy Juſtice in cauſing me to drink of a bitter Cup for my portion, look upon thy loving kindneſs in tempering this at the ſame time with Sweetneſs, and thy Goodneſs in adminiſtring it too; foraſmuch as thy infinite Wiſdom knows the draught will conduce to my Health; may I therefore take it from thy hand with all Reverence and Benediction of thy holy Name.

O may I conſider the end for which thou afflicteſt me, which is to try and

prove

prove me, to purge away all my Droſs, and refine me, to bring me nearer to thy ſelf; that thou haſt appointed the way which leads to the Kingdom of Heaven to be by Suffering, and haſt ordained me to paſs through many Tribulations before I can enter into it; and withal, the vaſt inequality, the unaccountable diſproportion between the lightneſs and momentarineſs of theſe preſent Sufferings, and the ſolidity and perpetuity of that Glory they ſhall work out; ſuch as will not admit any imaginable compariſon.

And then give me ſuch a frame of Spirit, as I may not only bear my lot with Patience, but exult in it; count it all Joy, that I fall into ſuch Trials and Afflictions.

O my God, ſatisfie my Soul fully of the intimate, inſeparable Connexion there is between ſuffering and obtaining that endleſs Beatitude which thou haſt promiſed for a reward of my Obedience and Service.

And then aid me being ſo perſwaded by thy Holy Spirit to pray with the deepeſt ſincerity, with the moſt intenſe earneſtneſs my Soul is capable of, that thou wouldſt be pleaſed to cut and wound, to burn and ſear me here, ſo that I may by this means be preſerved ſound unto the day of the Lord, and may at that terrible time eſcape the being cut aſunder with the Sword of thy Vengeance, having my portion among Hypocrites, or being tormented in unquenchable Flames, with thoſe who are curſed from thy Preſence.

For my encouragement to endure all this here, and enduring to rejoyce that I am counted worthy to ſuffer; to run with chearfulneſs as well as Patience the Race that is ſet before me, however incumbred it may be with ſharp thorns, however beſet it may be with occaſions of troubles and affliction; grant me thy Grace to have my Heart always fixt in meditating on the great Example of the Captain of my Salvation, that I may continually have my

Spirit

Spirit elevated into a devout Contemplation of him, constantly looking up by Faith to the Author and Finisher of my Faith, the ever-blessed Jesus, *who for the Joy that was set before him, endured and despised the pains and shame of the Cross; and for having done so, is now sat down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God; and that I may likewise look round about upon that bright Cloud of Witnesses encompassing me, the Armies of Martyrs and Confessors, who with invincible Courage and unwearied Constancy bore far heavier loads of Affliction than any I have hitherto undergone, endured the most violent and scorching Heats of Persecution, and pass'd through Fire and Water to approve their Fidelity to thee.*

Then shall it be, that animated by his powerful Example, who was Life, and came to give it to as many as should believe on, and follow him; provoked by a noble Emulation of his Followers, quickned by a lively Hope of entring into those Joys, which our Master is gone before to prepare and take possession of on my behalf, and of being partakers of the Riches of that Glory, of which they have received the Earnest, I shall be enabled with Patience, having continued to do and suffer thy Will; to finish my course with joy, and thro' this means shall obtain that Honour and Glory and Immortality I seek for, receive that Crown of Life thou hast promised to give to those, who by enduring unto the end, and being faithful unto Death, should overcome the world, all its Menaces as well as Flatteries; its Torments as well as its Pleasures.

Even so be it, O gracious Lord, to thy Servant who prayeth and putteth his Trust in thee, that he shall be heard for thy own great Names sake, which is merciful and gracious, and for the Merits and Intercession of thy beloved Son, in whom thou art well-pleased; while in contemplation of that Goodness, that thou art, and upon the assurance of thy own Promises made to me in that Son of thy Bosom, I presume to believe, that thou canst not deny me what I ask in his Holy Name and Words, saying,

Our Father, &c. FINIS.